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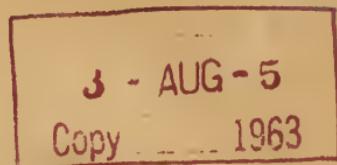




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SKETCH OF THE LIFE

OF THE



ILLUSTRIOUS WASHINGTON,

FIRST PRESIDENT

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

BY AN ENGLISH LADY.

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THE materials of which this Memoir is composed, are selected from Public Documents, State Papers, and unpublished M.S. Letters of General WASHINGTON, which are preserved in the British Museum, London, and to which the Compiler has had access, through the excellent arrangements of that Institution, and the politeness and obliging attention of its Officers.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE
OF THE
ILLUSTRIOS WASHINGTON,

First President of the United States of America.

THE Honourable GEORGE WASHINGTON, Commander-in-Chief of the American forces, and first President of the United States of America, was born at Bridges Creek, in Virginia, on the 22d of February, in the year 1732. He was the son of Augustine Washington, and grandson of John Washington, of respectable connections in the north of England, who settled in America in 1657.

Augustine, the father of our hero, died in 1743, leaving two daughters, and one son, Lawrence, by his first wife Jane Butler; George was the eldest son, by his second marriage, with Mary Ball. In boyhood he displayed a great inclination for mathematical pursuits, every thing he did was executed with method, exactness, and neatness: when only thirteen, he had filled thirty folio pages with copies of bills, receipts, and business transactions, which he headed '*Forms of Writing.*' In his manuscripts, which were found at Mount Vernon after his decease, was the following code of maxims, which, as it formed a foundation of the correct principles from which this great man never deviated in after life, and as they were penned at the same early period of his career, cannot fail to be read with admiration by the friends of this noble character.

"RULES OF CIVILITY AND DECENT BEHAVIOUR,

IN

COMPANY AND CONVERSATION.

"1. Every action in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those present.

"2. In the presence of others, sing not to yourself with a humming noise, nor drum with your fingers or feet.

"3. Sleep not when others speak; sit not when others stand; speak not when you should hold your peace; walk not when others stop.

"4. Turn not your back to others, especially in speaking; jog not the table or desk, on which another reads or writes; lean not on any one.

"5. Be no flatterer; neither play with any one that delights not to be played with.

"6. Read no letters, books, or papers, in company; but when there is a necessity for doing it, you must ask leave. Come not near the books, or writings of any one, so as to read them, unless desired, nor give your opinion of them unasked; also, look not nigh when another is writing a letter.

"7. Let your countenance be pleasant, but, in serious matters, somewhat grave.

"8. Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another, though he were your enemy.

"9. When you meet with one of greater quality than yourself, stop and retire, especially if it be at a door, or any strait place, to give way for him to pass.

"10. They that are in dignity, or in office, have in all places precedence; but whilst they are young, they ought to respect those that are their equals in birth, or other qualities, though they have no public charge.

"11. It is good manners to prefer them to whom we speak before ourselves, especially if they be above us, with whom in no sort we ought to begin.

"12. Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive.

"13. In visiting the sick, do not presently play the physician, if you be not knowing therein.

"14. In writing, or speaking, give to every person his due title, according to his degree and the custom of the place.

“15. Strive not with your superiors in argument, but always submit your judgment to others with modesty.

“16. Undertake not to teach your equal in the art himself professes ; it savours of arrogance.

“17. When a man does all he can, though it succeeds not well, blame not him that did it.

“18. Being to advise, or reprehend any one, consider whether it ought to be in public or in private, presently or at some other time, in what terms to do it ; and in reproving, show no signs of choler, but do it with sweetness and mildness.

“19. Take all admonitions thankfully, in what time or place soever given ; but afterwards, not being culpable, take a time or place convenient to let him know it that gave them.

“20. Mock not, nor jest at any thing of importance ; break no jests that are sharp-biting—and if you deliver anything witty and pleasant, abstain from laughing thereat yourself.

“21. Wherein you reprove another, be unblameable yourself ; for example is more prevalent than precept.

“22. Use no reproachful language against any one, neither curse, nor revile.

“23. Be not hasty to believe flying reports to the disparagement of any.

“24. In your apparel, be modest, and endeavour to accommodate nature, rather than to procure admiration ; keep to the fashion of your equals, such as are civil and orderly, with respect to times and places.

“25. Play not the peacock, looking every where about you to see if you be well decked, if your shoes fit well, if your stockings sit neatly, and clothes handsomely.

“26. Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for it is a sign of a tractable and commendable nature ; and in all causes of passion, admit reason to govern.

“27. Associate yourself of good quality, if you esteem your own reputation ; for it is better to be alone, than in bad company.

“28. Be not immodest in urging your friend to discover a secret.

“29. Utter not base and frivolous things amongst grave and learned men ; nor very difficult questions, or subjects, among the ignorant, nor things hard to be believed.

“30. Speak not of doleful things in time of mirth, nor at the table ; speak not of melancholy things, as death, and wounds ; and if others mention them, change, if you can, the discourse. Tell not your dreams, but to your intimate friend.

“31. Break not a jest where none takes pleasure in mirth ; laugh not aloud, nor at all, without occasion. Deride no man’s misfortune, though there seems to be some cause.

“32. Speak not injurious words, neither in jest nor earnest ; scoff at none, although they give occasion.

“33. Be not forward, but friendly and courteous ; the first to salute, hear, and answer ; and be not pensive when it is a time to converse.

“34. Detract not from others, neither be excessive in commending.

“35. Go not thither, where you know not whether you shall be welcome or not. Give not advice without being asked, and when desired do it briefly.

“36. If two contend together, take not the part of either unconstrained, and be not obstinate in your own opinion ; in things indifferent, be of the major side.

“37. Reprehend not the imperfections of others, for that belongs to parents, masters and superiors.

“38. Gaze not on the marks or blemishes of others, and ask not how they came. What you may speak in secret to your friend, deliver not before others.

“39. Speak not in an unknown tongue in company, but in your own language, and as those of quality do, and not as the vulgar ; sublime matters treat seriously.

“40. Think before you speak, pronounce not imperfectly, nor bring out your words too hastily, but orderly and distinctly.

“41. When another speaks, be attentive yourself, and disturb not the audience. If any hesitate in his words, help him not, nor prompt him without being desired ; interrupt him not, nor answer him, till his speech be ended.

“42. Treat with men at fit times about business ; and whisper not in the company of others.

“43. Make no comparisons ;—and if any of the company be commended for any brave act of virtue, commend not another for the same.

“44. Be not apt to relate news, if you know not the truth thereof. In discoursing of things you have heard, name not your author always. A secret discover not.

“45. Be not curious to know the affairs of others, neither approach to those that speak in private.

“46. Undertake not what you cannot perform, but be careful to keep your promise.

“47. When you deliver a matter, do it without passion, and with discretion, however mean the person be you do it to.

“48. When your superiors talk to any body, hearken not, neither speak, nor laugh.

“49. In disputes be not so desirous to overcome, as not to give liberty to each one to deliver his opinion, and submit to the judgment of the major part, especially if they are judges of the dispute.

“50. Be not tedious in discourse, make not many digressions, nor repeat often the same manner of discourse.

“51. Speak not evil of the absent, for it is unjust.

“52. Make no show of taking great delight in your victuals: feed not with greediness; cut your bread with a knife; lean not on the table; neither find fault with what you eat.

“53. Be not angry at table, whatever happens, and if you have reason to be so, show it not; put on a cheerful countenance, especially if there be strangers, for good humour makes one dish of meat a feast.

“54. Set not yourself at the upper end of the table; but if it be your due, or that the master of the house will have it so, contend not, lest you should trouble the company.

“55. When you speak of God, or his attributes, let it be seriously in reverence. Honour and obey your natural parents, although they be poor.

“56. Let your recreations be manful, not sinful.

“57. Labour to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, called conscience.”

George Washington, at the age of fourteen, would have entered the navy, but that he yielded to the maternal persuasions of his mother, and in compliance with her wishes, turned his thoughts to the occupation of a surveyor; and, at sixteen, made a tour in that capacity through the Alleghany mountains. At that early period of his life, he evinced such nobleness of mind—so much real courage, firmness, and stability of conduct, that, at nineteen, he was chosen one of the adjutants-general of Virginia; that province being then divided into four military districts; he was stationed over the northern part of it, with the rank of major.

Lawrence Washington had succeeded his father in the possession of Mount Vernon, and on him devolved the charge of the family. This gentleman entered the army early, and had served in the West Indies; but ill health obliged him to quit the service, and he retired to Mount Vernon: but as it was feared that consumptive symptoms were advancing rapidly, he was advised to travel, and went first to England, but not finding the change beneficial, returned to Virginia. Still, growing worse, in 1751, he was prevailed upon to try a voyage to Barbadoes, to

which place he was accompanied by his brother George, to whom he was affectionately attached. During their stay in Barbadoes, our hero was seized with small-pox—the violence of the disorder caused him a confinement of several weeks to the house. After his recovery, he returned to Virginia, whither he was soon followed by his brother, who lived but a very short time after his arrival, and died on the 26th of July, 1752. Not having any children, the estate of MountVernon became the property of Major Washington, who, in the following year, received an appointment to go as a commissioner over the Alleghany mountains, with authority from the governor of Virginia, Robert Dinwiddie, Esq., to investigate the conduct of the French, who were attempting great encroachments in those parts. This commission bore date 13th October, 1753. At Fredericksburg, Washington engaged Jacob Vanbraam to be his interpreter, and thence proceeded on his dangerous errand, with proper credentials, and an official passport to guarantee his safety through the Indian territory. On the sixteenth of January the following year, Washington returned to Virginia; having acquitted himself in the execution of his mission so entirely to the satisfaction of the governor, that the latter promoted him to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, and appointed him second in command in an expedition to the Ohio. At that time, an official correspondence was opened between the governor and Washington. At the same period, Dinwiddie issued a proclamation, which had for its object, to ensure a grant of two thousand acres of land, on the banks of the Ohio, to be divided among the officers and soldiers who should engage to serve in that expedition.

Although this grant was confirmed by the King, the promised division was not effected until long after the termination of the war. Nor would it have taken place at all, but through the great exertions made by Washington. The great purport of the expedition to the Ohio, was to construct forts to guard against the progress of the French, who were making daily encroachments in that quarter. Of the two companies over which Washington had the command, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, one was to be raised by himself, the other by the Burgesses of Virginia. Previous to their leaving Alexandria, Washington, in a letter to Governor Dinwiddie, dated March 9th, 1765, states the necessity of having money to pay the men, "*many of whom*," he writes, "*are without shoes, others want stockings; some are without shirts*, and, not a few, have scarce a coat or waistcoat to their backs—but I really believe every man of them, for their own credit's sake, is willing to be clothed at his own expense." He then advised that a part of the pay might be

retained for clothing ; but, on no account, to delay longer the sending a remittance. Other companies were added, and Colonel Fry had the command of the whole expedition. Washington continued to represent the wants of his men, who only received partial relief. The officers also were allowed only the fare of the privates, so that dissatisfaction became general ; and from Yonghiogany, Washington, in his correspondence with the Governor, bearing date 18th of May, wrote, *that unless an alteration should be made respecting the officers, the latter would only hold their commissions, and that gratuitously, until other officers arrive to supply their places ; for myself,* he says, *“ giving up my commission is quite contrary to my intention ; nay, I ask it as a greater favour than any amongst the many I have received from your Honour, to confirm it to me. But, let me serve voluntarily : then I will, with the greatest pleasure in life, devote my services to the expedition, without any other reward than the satisfaction of serving my country ; but to slaving dangerously for the shadow of pay, through woods, rocks, mountains, I would rather prefer the great toil of a daily labourer, and dig for a maintenance, provided I were reduced to the necessity, than serve upon such ignoble terms.”* On the death of Colonel Fry, which occurred at Will's Creek, Washington, who had been second in authority succeeded to the command of the Virginia forces, and the rank of Colonel. The most formidable difficulties continued to annoy the army, and though the Colonel did not cease his representations to the Governor, the general grievances remained unremedied ; so that when in camp before Great Meadows, where they had intelligence that reinforcements had reached the French at Fort Duquesne, and that they were preparing to attack the English, Washington was aware that his men were in no fit condition to be conquerors, as they had neither bread—nor money—and had very little clothing. This great man never quailed at the face of danger—he summoned his officers, and after holding two councils of war, it was decided that they should retreat. Things were arranged in the best manner that circumstances would admit. The total want of waggons, compelled the men to drag the baggage on swivels, in which labour they were no way aided by the men from the independent companies. At Great Meadows the army halted to recruit their strength, and whilst waiting a few days for that purpose, the fire of the French army was heard at a distance. Breastworks had been thrown up,—entrenchments made ;—in short, every precaution to preserve them from being surprised by the enemy, had been taken. The firing continued, and in the morning of the third of July, the French were in sight. From eight that morning,

until eleven at night, a desperate battle ensued ; torrents of rain poured during the greatest part of the day : the Virginia regiments fought bravely, until the French asked a parley. This was not granted in the first instance, as the Colonel suspected the offer might be a mere stratagem, to obtain a sight of the interior state of the camp ; but, on a second proposal, accompanied by a desire that an officer should be sent to them, a parley was granted. Vanbraam, being the only officer who was at all acquainted with the French language, was sent, and he returned with articles of capitulation which were very favourable to Washington and his army.—These were signed by both parties at midnight ; but when, the following day, the Colonel was about to act upon them, he met with obstacles, and discovered that Vanbraam had, through ignorance or design, rendered his interpretation different in some material parts from the original. The extraordinary talents of the future hero had already excited the envy of military commanders, and the result of Vanbraam's conduct was, for a time, injurious to the character of Washington. In the articles of capitulation was a sentence relating to the death of a French officer, Jumonville, who, with an escort of thirty men had gone out to reconnoitre the state of the enemy, and having met with a party of English and savages, a skirmish ensued, (the two parties then considering themselves in a state of warfare,) in which Jumonville and others were killed, and the rest of his men made prisoners. In requiring the liberty of those prisoners, the French had used the term *assassination*, which the interpreter rendered by the word *death*. This error formed a matter of accusation against this great man : but in August, the same year, the House of Burgesses having caused the articles to be laid before them, approved them, and also all the operations of the campaign ; and voted a message of thanks to Colonel Washington and his officers, for their bravery and conduct ; and added a gratuity to the privates. The Governor, Dinwiddie, also justified the conduct of Colonel Washington, by official authority, which pronounced that he had acted, in the case of Jumonville, agreeably to his instructions, and in a manner worthy of praise. During this time, Dinwiddie failed to comply with an article in the treaty of capitulation, by his detention of the French prisoners, for whose liberty they had stipulated ; a mode of proceeding that was averse to Washington's principles of honour and justice.

In August, the Governor issued orders for the army to proceed over the Alleghanies, to dispossess the French of a fort they had constructed there. Washington combatted the measure, by stating the reasons of

its impracticability. The want of money to recruit men—the want of provisions, and the lateness of the season. His reasoning prevailed, and the plan was given up. The Carolina troops, for the pay of which a particular sum had been appropriated, finding the fund was exhausted, disbanded themselves, and returned home.

At this period, Dinwiddie received money for the enlargement of the army, upon which he formed arrangements that he tried to impose on the army as the result of official orders; and by which he had in view to throw out the higher officers. He reduced the Virginia regiments into independent companies, that there might not be any officer to rank higher than a Captain. As it would have been dishonourable for Washington to have continued under such circumstances, he resigned, and retired to Mount Vernon. But shortly after, a due sense of the value of his services, caused Governor Sharpe, who received his Majesty's commission to act as Commander-in-Chief of the forces against the French, to desire Colonel Fitzhugh to write his wishes that Washington would return to the army. The latter, in his reply, dated 15th Nov. 1754, explained his motives for declining to accept the request; and then added: "*I shall have the consolation of knowing, that I have opened the way, when the smallness of our numbers exposed us to the attacks of a superior enemy; that I have hitherto stood the heat and brunt of the day, and escaped untouched, in time of extreme danger; and that I have the thanks of my country for the services I have rendered it.*"

That Dinwiddie had acted only from his selfish, contracted ideas, is proved by the copy of a letter, in his own letter-book, dated 25th of October, 1754, in which he says to Earl Halifax: "As there have been some disputes between the regulars and the officers appointed by me, I am now determined to reduce our regiment into independent companies, so that from our forces there will be no other distinguished officer above a captain."*

Governor Diawiddie had, for some months back been urging the English Parliament to impose a poll-tax of 2s.6d. per head: he now renewed his favourite recommendation, and concluded his letter by observing, "I know of no method to compel the colonists to their duty to the King, but that." From this mode of acting, the Governor gave to England false notions of the temper, character, and feelings of the Americans, and led the council to act on false principles; besides creating bitterness and dissatisfaction among the colonists.

* The new military arrangements were issued by the Governor in October, 1754. The general orders only came with Major Braddock, and were dated St. Jamee's, 12th of November, the same year.

General Braddock arrived in Virginia, on the 20th of February, 1755, bearing the rank of Commander-in-Chief of all the military forces in North America. He also brought the King's orders of the 12th November, by which the general and field-officers of provincial troops, were not to have rank with the general and field-officers under the King's commission ;—also, that all captains, and other inferior officers, of the regulars, were to take post of the former, in court-martials, and on all occasions, where their joint duty called them.

Washington was living at Mount Vernon. General Braddock, who well knew the importance of his services, and convinced that his honourable feelings would not allow of the offer of a commission under the humiliating terms of the King's general orders, desired his aide-de-camp, Mr. Orme, to invite Colonel Washington to make one of General Braddock's family during the campaign. The latter accepted the offer, on the ground of serving as a volunteer, giving, as his reasons, that he was desirous of acquiring military knowledge under an able commander, and he was glad to engage himself gratuitously in the service of his country.

On the 10th of May, General Braddock read in the general orders, his appointment of Mr. Washington to be one of his aides-de-camp, a post that was particularly agreeable to the latter, "*because,*" as he afterwards stated to his brother, "*I am thereby freed from all commands but his, and shall give his orders, which must be implicitly obeyed.*"

Our hero left Mount Vernon in April, to join the expedition intended for the Ohio. A violent attack of fever delayed him some weeks, and he was in a state of great debility when he joined the advanced division of the army. Such was the supineness of the provincial governors, that they neglected to support the cause by supplying the wants of the army. The Pennsylvanians were the most backward ; nor could waggons have been obtained, but that Benjamin Franklin, who was postmaster-general of that province, procured one hundred and fifty waggons, with a proportionate number of horses, on his own individual security. General Braddock, in his letters, blamed the lukewarmness of public feeling, which caused so many obstacles to be thrown in the way of the enterprize; he blamed, and justly, the dishonesty of agents, and the faithlessness of contractors ; still he looked with certainty to conquer. So general was this impression, that in many places, subscriptions were entered into, for raising money to celebrate his victory. On the way to Fort Duquesne, several councils of war were held, and at length Washington's advice, to leave the waggons and proceed with the

necessaries on the horses, was followed, as the slow manner in which they got forward, was sure to give advantages to the French. Within ten miles of the fort, and on the banks of the Monongahela, when passing near a vast wood, a fire from the French army commenced upon the advanced division, who returned it at random, and with very little effect; the enemy, concealed and protected by the trees, continued to pour upon them a heavy discharge of musketry, and before the general could reach the spot, the advanced division fell back on the artillery, and the other columns of the army, and caused a panic which no efforts could recover. The general, and the officers, used the utmost exertions that bravery and courage could suggest; their example failed to rally the men, and they were sacrificed to the confusion and disorder that prevailed. General Braddock had five horses shot under him, and at last received a mortal wound, of which he died during the night of the 13th. Washington had two horses killed under him, and received four bullets in his clothes, yet remained uninjured; and was the only surviving officer of that disastrous day, whom Providence preserved unhurt. Often, in his after life, did he describe the pleasure with which he saw the display of the army on the morning of the 9th of July. The men in health and spirits—their arms glittering under a bright sun; but these, having crossed the river in safety, in less than four hours after, more than half their number were killed, or wounded. Of all the army, the Virginia troops alone retained their senses; they acted as men. "But," said Washington, in a letter which he addressed to Governor Dinwiddie after the battle, "*the dastardly regular troops (so called) exposed those who were inclined to do their duty, to almost certain death; and, at length, in spite of every effort to the contrary, they broke, and ran as sheep before hounds, leaving the artillery, ammunition, provisions, baggage, and, in short, every thing to the enemy.*"

"*It is supposed that we had three hundred or more killed, and about that number were brought off wounded. It is conjectured (I believe with much truth) that two-thirds of both received their shot from our own cowardly regulars, who gathered themselves into a body, contrary to orders, ten or twelve deep—would then level, fire, and shoot down the men before them.*"

Strange as the fate of that battle seemed at the time it happened, a consideration of the circumstances has cleared much of its mystery; the General showed great warmth and intemperance of language, at the disappointments he met with: he was ignorant of the mode of attack, yet neglected to send scouts to reconnoitre the position of the enemy; then he trusted too much on the veterans under his command, which

caused him not to regard advice ; and though he acted with the greatest bravery and spirit, he became himself, with numbers of his army, the victim of his self-confidence.

So high was the character of Washington's military conduct, that the Reverend Mr. Davies, when preaching a sermon in Hanover county, taking occasion to applaud patriotism and military zeal, said :—"As a remarkable instance of this, I may point out to the public, that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope, Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a manner, for some important service to his country."

Colonel Washington returned to Mount Vernon, on the 26th July ; his reflective mind fitted him for the enjoyment of rural pursuits ; but his prominent passion inclined him to a military life. When the rumour reached him that the assembly at Virginia was desirous that he should take the command of their forces, he expressed his opinion respecting the great and numerous obstacles that would attend such a command : and, at the same time, that he declared his willingness to give his exertions to his country, he also declared his determination, *not* to accept the office, but, upon certain conditions, which his late experience had taught him to consider necessary. These being stated, were complied with ; and the appointment of Commander-in-Chief of the Virginia forces, dated 14th of August, 1755, was immediately forwarded to him. On that occasion, Governor Dinwiddie addressed a letter to Sir Thomas Robinson, Secretary of State, in which he said :—

" I have granted commission to raise sixteen companies, augmenting our forces to one thousand men, and have incorporated them into a regiment, the command thereof being given to Colonel George Washington, who was one of General Braddock's aides-de-camp, and, I think, a man of great merit and resolution. Our officers are greatly dispirited for want of his Majesty's commissions, that, when they join the regulars, they may have some rank ; and I am persuaded it would be of infinite service, if his Majesty would graciously please to honour them with his commissions, the same as in General Shirley's, and Sir William Pepperell's regiments ; and I am convinced, if General Braddock had survived, he would have recommended Mr. Washington to the royal favour, which I beg your interest in recommending."

Washington proceeded to take the command of the troops, which he did at Fort Cumberland, and went on to Alexandria, where he arrived 2d October. A few days later, he informs the Governor of the want of necessary articles, and requests a supply of money to pay the men : also,

points the positive necessity of putting the men under regulation, and enforcing obedience. Continuing that subject, he says, " *The men desert for the least reprimand; no orders are obeyed, but such as a party of soldiers, or my own drawn sword enforces. Without this, not a single horse can be had--to such a pitch has the insolence of these people arrived, by having every point hitherto submitted to them. Why should it be expected from us, who are all young and inexperienced, to govern and keep up a proper spirit of discipline without laws, when the best and most experienced can scarcely do it with them? I can confidently assert, that recruiting, clothing, arming, maintaining, and subsisting soldiers, who have since deserted, have cost the country an immense sum, which might have been prevented, were we under restraints that would terrify the soldiers from such practices.*" He was in great want of an active commissary; in short, every letter contained a repetition of the same deficiencies, as nothing whatever was done. The officers employed to recruit, amused themselves, trifling away their time without taking the needful trouble; in short, no one but Washington, whose patient forbearance was remarkable, could have continued in his hopeless office. He, however, with a magnanimity of mind, that was the more admirable as it was rare, continued to labour for his country with unrelaxed perseverance. Head-quarters were fixed at Winchester; there, the inhabitants were harassed and murdered by parties of French and Indians; meanwhile, no representations could induce the Governor to send men, and Washington could not obtain recruits. Whatever might have been the state of public opinion, the officers showed no zeal whatever in the cause; and their gross misconduct, in gambling, drinking, and swearing, drew upon them the displeasure of the House of Burgesses, and unjust censure on their commander:—unjust, because his power was limited. He was expected to exercise strict discipline, yet he could neither reward nor punish, without waiting for orders from the Governor; so that he wrote to him, in a letter dated 22d April, 1756, " *The melancholy situation of the people, the little prospect of assistance, the gross and scandalous abuses cast upon the officers in general, which is reflecting upon me, in particular, for suffering misconduct of such extraordinary kinds, and the distant prospect, if any, of gaining honour and reputation in the service, cause me to lament the hour that gave me a commission, and would induce me, at any other time than this of imminent danger, to resign, without one hesitating moment, a command from which I never expect to reap either honour or benefit; but, on the contrary, have almost an absolute certainty of incurring displeasure below, while the murder of*

helpless families may be laid to my account here!" The Governor ordered out a great part of the militia, upon which one of the council, Colonel Fairfax, wrote as follows to Washington:—"The House of Burgesses are pleased with the Governor's orders, and depend on your vigilance and success. Your endeavours in the service, and defence of your country, must redound to your honour; therefore, do not let any unavoidable interruptions sicken your mind in the attempts you may pursue. Your good health and fortune are the toast at every table. Among the Romans, such a general acclamation and public regard shown to any of their chieftains, were always esteemed a high honour, and gratefully accepted." Still kept ignorant of any positive intentions, or plan, Washington ventured his own suggestions to the Governor, regarding the means of defending the frontiers. "*I have been formerly,*" he wrote, "*and am at present, pretty full in offering my opinion and counsel on matters which regard the public safety and interest. These have been solely the objects of all my thoughts, words, and actions; and, in order to avoid censure in every part of my conduct, I make it a rule to obey the dictates of your honour, the assembly, and a good conscience. I shall not hereafter trouble you further on these topics, as I can add nothing to what I have said.*" However, in his next letter to the Governor (3d May,) he says: "*I must again beg leave to desire your particular instructions and information, as being in a state of uncertainty, without knowing the plan of operations; I am much embarrassed, and left to guess at every thing. So much am I kept in the dark, that I do not know whether to prepare for the offensive or defensive.*"

In the beginning of January, 1756, Washington proved his determination to enforce regular discipline, by bringing one of the officers under court-martial, which condemned him to be suspended. The Colonel took that opportunity, when reading the sentence at the head of the army, to give the men some salutary instruction and advice, which he concluded in the following words:—

"I think it my duty, gentlemen, as I have the honour to preside over you, to give this friendly admonition; especially, since I am determined, as far as my small experience, my abilities, and interest in the service may dictate, to observe the strictest discipline. On the other hand, you may as certainly depend upon having rigid justice administered to all, and that I shall make it the most agreeable part of my duty to study merit, and reward the brave and deserving. I assure you, gentlemen, that partiality shall never bias my conduct, nor shall prejudice injure any; but, throughout the whole tenour of my proceedings, I shall endeavour, as

far as I am able, to reward and punish, without the least departure from equity."

On 14th January, the Colonel requested of the Governor to acquaint him, whether it was intended to take the field in the spring, or that the troops were to guard the frontiers? At this time Washington met with opposition in the command by Captain Dayworthy, at the instigation of Governor Sharpe. The Colonel wished this matter settled, as he observed to Dinwiddie, that "contention is the root of evil, and destructive to the best operations." Having obtained permission from the latter, Washington went to Boston, to present his memorial to Mr. Shirley, leaving the direction of the army to Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen. He was every where well received, gained the point on which he went, and returned to the army 23d March; and to head-quarters at Winchester, on 6th April. There he found the inhabitants in great alarm from the Indians, who committed great and continual depredations, frequently accompanied by murder of the most cruel kind. Colonel Washington, in a letter to Mr. Robinson, speaker and treasurer of the House of Burgesses, which he wrote in August, 1756, mentioned the useless expense of keeping Fort Cumberland as a military store, which could not resist a single half-pounder, and he recommended Cox's Fort as preferable. In Mr. Robinson's reply, he informs Washington, that the committee all agree in opinion with *him*; but on naming it to the Governor, the latter was very warm, and refused to remove the garrison, or order the fort to be demolished. In the above letter, Washington stated the just causes that the soldiers had for complaint—the mode of payment, and the smallness of it, as they received less than any other of the troops, many of whom had English pay.

Again, in September, the Colonel repeats the danger of Fort Cumberland being attacked, and that its weakness required immediate fortification. "*The inhabitants*," he added, "*are so annoyed by frequent incursions of the enemy, from whom they have suffered most severely, that the environs are deserted; numbers have left the frontiers for fifty miles round.*"

At the same period, Washington wrote his impartial opinion of the state of things to the Governor, and urged the necessity of an addition of men, for the protection of those parts. Of the militia, he wrote: "*they are obstinate, self-willed, and perverse; of little or no service to the inhabitants, and very burdensome to the country.*" The conduct of those men was, individually, gross, insulting, and wantonly unjust; yet, when the Colonel stated these facts to the Governor, the latter was offended, called Washington's descriptions *unmannerly*, and treated the man, who

was labouring with excessive zeal for his country's benefit, as though he had been actuated by some unworthy and sinister intention. He persisted in keeping Fort Cumberland, and did what with that determination he should have done long before : ordered fortifications to be raised for its defence. Regardless of the fate of the people, he desired Washington to draw his men from Winchester, and proceed without delay to Fort Cumberland, to expedite the works there ; thus acting like one, who had determined in order to preserve a point, the situation of which was ill-suited to the purpose, to leave that part of the country an open passage for the enemy. Such conduct appeared to Washington inexplicable ; and he observed, in a letter to an intimate friend, "*My orders are dark, doubtful, and uncertain; to-day approved: to-morrow condemned. We are either insensible of danger till it breaks upon our heads; or, through mistaken notions of economy, evade the expense till the blow is struck.*"

In December 1756, the Colonel's statements having remained unnoticed, and Lord Loudon being expected to take command of the King's forces, Washington wrote to the Governor for more explicit orders—and received intimation, that it was Lord Loudon's determination to keep Fort Cumberland ; and the stores were removed thither from Winchester. As his Lordship had never been in Virginia, it was evident that his decision was regulated by the representations of Dinwiddie ; it is not, therefore, extraordinary, that the prejudice of one, acting with the ignorance of the other, should produce the very worst results. Mr. Robinson saw clearly the misconception of circumstances ; he regretted the infatuated notion of keeping up Fort Cumberland ; and, in his next letter to Colonel Washington, made the following observation :—

" The present unhappy state of our country, must fill the mind of every well-wisher to it with dismal and gloomy apprehensions ; and without some speedy alterations in our counsels, which may God send, the fate of it must soon be determined."

In the beginning of 1757, it became known that Dinwiddie was to return home, and would be succeeded by Lord Loudon, as Governor of Virginia. Washington, on receiving the intelligence, proposed going there to facilitate the settling their accompts, but this offer was refused ; —in short, during the period of his government, Dinwiddie had not failed to harass and distress Washington, and to frustrate his plans ; a meanness of conduct, that could only be accounted for by those who knew that the Governor had experienced a great disappointment, when the House of Assembly elected Washington to have the command of their troops, he having intended that office for his friend and countryman, Colonel Innes.

Lord Loudon having come to Virginia, Colonel Washington addressed him a letter in 1757, in which he drew a statement of facts relating to the army from the time he first accompanied it to the Ohio in 1754. In that campaign, he observed, the men encountered various inconveniences of hunger and nakedness—circumstances that were likely to excite general discontent—caused frequent desertion, and operated as a preventive to the business of enlistment; and the Colonel concluded his statement in the following words : “*The orders I receive are full of ambiguity—I am left, like a wanderer in the wilderness, to proceed at hazard. I am answerable for consequences, and am blamed without the privilege of defence.*”

The last letter that Washington addressed to Dinwiddie, was dated 5th of November, 1757. In that he recapitulated the grievances endured by the army, by the continued neglect they had experienced from the commencement of its operations; in reply to which, the Governor treated his statement with contemptuous silence; mentioned the ingratitude shown to him from the Colonel; and having observed that he was on the eve of resigning his office, coldly hoped that his successor might treat him with equal kindness. From the tenour of the correspondence, it was clear that Dinwiddie had listened to the fabrications which the enemies to their country had raised against that great and noble-minded man. At this time, Washington was labouring under serious indisposition, which so increased upon him, that he was compelled, by the advice of Dr. Craik, to remove to Mount Vernon. Previous, however, to his doing so, it having become certain that false representations respecting Washington’s conduct and intentions, had been stated to the Governor, he addressed Dinwiddie in vindication; and requested to know the author of those reports. To this he received only a vague and unsatisfactory answer. Dinwiddie sailed for England, in January, 1758. On the Colonel’s return to the army, in April, after a necessary absence of four months, he found things much in the state as when he left it; and resolved, within himself, to quit it at the close of that campaign. Still, bent on making every effort in his power—and finding it was fixed they should proceed to the Ohio, to dispossess the French of certain forts they had erected, he went to hold an interview with Colonel Bouquet, and concert with him the best mode of conducting the army thither. But, finding him fixed to lead them a new road, which was yet to be cut, Washington declared his opinion that it would ruin the enterprise. He also objected to the proposed division of the army on their march.

On the 1st of September, 1758, Colonel Washington observed in a letter to Mr. Robinson, Speaker, " *That appearance of glory, which we had once in view; that hope, that laudable ambition of serving our country, and meriting its applause, are now no more. All is divindled into ease, sloth, and fatal inactivity. In a word, all is lost, if the ways of men in power, like certain ways of Providence, are not inscrutable.* " *

* * * * * Yet, every fool will have his notions, will prattle and talk away; and why may not *I*? We seem, then, in my opinion, to act under the guidance of an evil genius. The conduct of our leaders, if not actuated by superior orders, is tempered with something, *I do not care to give a name to.* Nothing now but a miracle can bring this campaign to a happy issue."

In allusion to his advice, respecting the road not having been attended to, Washington tells the Speaker what might have been expected, had they proceeded as he had wished, with expedition. " *Now,*" he continued, " *behold how the golden opportunity has been lost; perhaps, never more to be regained! How is it to be accounted for? Can General Forbes have orders for this?—Impossible. Will, then, our injured country pass by such abuses? I hope not. Rather let a full representation of the matter go to his Majesty. Let him know how grossly his glory, and interest, and the public money, have been prostituted.*"

In October, the same year, Colonel Washington wrote from the camp at Raystown, to General Forbes, who had the command of his Majesty's forces employed on the Ohio expedition, to acquaint him with a plan he had formed respecting a line of march for the army; and at the end of that month he was in advance, with a division of the main army, that was appointed to open the road. A council of war being held at Loyal-Hanna, it was declared not advisable to proceed further that season; but this declararation yielded shortly after to a change of opinion, and the original enterprise was prosecuted. On leaving Loyal-Hanna, the command of a brigade was given to Washington, and the King's troops succeeded in getting possession of Fort Duquesne on the 25th November; but seeing, that all his advice was unheeded, and that his efforts to preserve his country in an honourable independence, were frustrated by the divided interest of various parties, Washington resolved to withdraw from the army at the close of that campaign. Following the dictates of his noble and generous principles, he would not omit a single opportunity of letting the Governor of Virginia know the state of the troops, and on the 2d of December, on their return to Loyal-Hanna, on the way to winter-quarters, he wrote to the Governor as follows:

"Unless effectual means shall be taken early in the spring, to reinforce the garrison left at Fort Duquesne, the place will be lost; and if the first Virginia regiment is to be kept up any longer, the men must be clothed, as sickness, death, and desertion, must greatly reduce their numbers, if left longer unsupplied."

On the arrival of the army at Winchester, the latter end of December, 1758, Washington resigned his commission—a circumstance that was much regretted by the officers.

On the 6th of January, 1759, Colonel Washington married Martha Custis, widow of Daniel Parke Custis, and daughter of John Dandridge. She was a fine personable woman, well educated, and pleasing in her manners, and possessed a good fortune. During the preceding year, Mr. Washington had been elected a member of the House of Burgesses of Virginia. On his joining the Assembly, their Speaker, Mr. Robinson, in compliance with their order, returned the public thanks of the House to Mr. Washington, for his high military conduct; and this he did with a warmth of feeling that quite confounded the hero, and he blushed, unable to reply; upon which, Mr. Robinson said, "Sit down, Mr. Washington, your modesty is equal to your valour, and that surpasses the power of any language that I possess."

The time immediately succeeding Washington's marriage was a period of general dissatisfaction through the colonies, towards which the parent country had evinced a disposition to tyrannize, by an attempt in the English Parliament, in March, 1764, to levy a revenue by a stamp tax; which being communicated to the House of Burgesses of Virginia, they appointed a committee to prepare a petition to the King, a memorial to the Lords, and a remonstrance to the Commons. These papers showed the legal exemption of the colonies from taxation, on the grounds of *non-representation*; and were couched in respectful language, firm, but free from any indication of violence. The application proved useless; the stamp act passed in January, the following year. The intelligence was received in America with consternation and regret. Patrick Henry, a member of the Courts of Justice in Virginia, whose superior talents raised him to the principal seat in the committee, on one occasion, when descanting on the obnoxious act, exclaimed, in a voice of thunder, and the look of a God, "Cæsar had his Brutus—Charles the First his Cromwell—and George the Third"—'Treason!' cried the Speaker, 'Treason, treason!' echoed from every part of the house. Henry, rising to a loftier attitude, finished his sentence with the firmest emphasis, "may profit by their example. If this be treason, make the most of it."

The stamp act was repealed in 1766, but the joy thus diffused, was of short duration; as in 1767, a motion passed, that the revenues in America, should be applied to provide the troops then there, and others, which it was the intention of government to send.

After the King's rejection of petitions from the Colonies, a tumult broke out at Boston, on the seizure of the sloop Liberty, by the Collector and Comptroller of Customs; they acting in an improper manner. British troops marched into Boston, with great parade and pomp; being refused quarters by the inhabitants, they took possession of the State House, and placed two field-pieces in its front.

Washington, who was a member of the legislature, was the person towards whom the friends to America looked for assistance in times of difficulty—his known patriotism, tried courage, and steady rectitude of conduct, made him to be considered worthy of the utmost confidence—he had in the year, 1769, thus expressed his political opinion in a letter to his friend and neighbour, Mr. George Mason: “At a time when our lordly masters in Great Britain will be satisfied with nothing less than the deprivation of American freedom, it seems highly necessary that something should be done to avert the stroke, and maintain the liberty which we have derived from our ancestors. But, the manner of doing it, to answer the purpose effectually, is the point in question. That no man should scruple, or hesitate a moment, to use arms in defence of so valuable a blessing, is clearly my opinion. Yet arms, I would beg leave to add, should be the last resource, the dernier resort. We have already, it is said, proved the inefficacy of addresses to the throne, and remonstrances to parliament. How far, then, their attention to our rights and privileges is to be awakened, or alarmed, by starving their trade and manufactures, remains to be tried.”

The plan pointed out in the above letter became a subject of general consideration—the mode of doing it was drawn out by Mr. Mason, and explained by Washington to many of their friends. The non-importation act was brought forward, and immediately passed. The matter was brought to a crisis in 1774, on the arrival of tea in the port of Boston, which the people firmly refused to receive. Upon this, the captain of the vessel asked the Governor for a clearance to return. The Governor refused, and the people emptied the tea into the ocean. The English Parliament voted that the custom-house, with its dependencies, should be moved from Boston to Salem.

When it was made known to the assembly of Burgesses in Virginia, that an order had arrived to close the port at Boston, from the first of

June, they passed an order to keep that day a solemn fast. In Washington's diary for the year 1774, is the following remark:—"June 1st, Wednesday, *went to church, and fasted all the day.*" At this time a discovery was effected through Mr. Benjamin Franklin, that a correspondence was kept up between Governor Hutchinson, Lieutenant Governor Oliver, and a part of the English ministry, for the purpose of inducing government to continue its arbitrary measures towards America. Franklin obtained copies of those letters, and sent them to the general court. In consequence of the event at Boston, the inhabitants, in many parts of the colonies assembled, to discuss, and to settle a mode of conduct, for the protection of their rights. Washington presided as chairman in the meeting at Fairfax, 18th of July, when a resolution passed for appointing delegates from the different colonies, to meet in Congress at Philadelphia, in the first week of September, 1774. Washington was named to be one of the committee, and at the rising of that assembly in October, was declared to have acted with the soundest judgment, and to have imparted the most important information of any person there. His habits through life, his gentlemanly deportment, and the plain candid manner in which he delivered his sentiments, having obtained him a welcome reception into the best society, fitted him for places of high trust and national confidence. The Virginia independent companies chose Washington as their leader, so that in April, 1775, when Lord Dunmore removed the powder from the magazine at Williamsburgh, and that the people opposed him, by the advice of Patrick Henry, and placed themselves under arms, they waited for the orders of their commander, Washington.

It was evidently the intention of Lord Dunmore, General Gage, and others then in power, to subjugate the colony; on which account the powder stores were every where seized, under *pretence* of danger, by leaving them in the hands of the dissatisfied party. During the second sitting of the continental congress at Philadelphia, in May, 1775, a skirmish had taken place between the King's soldiers and the provincial troops, and which proved favourable to the latter. Hostilities having commenced, it became highly necessary to form arrangements in defence of the rights and liberties of America. Enough had been proved of Washington's military talents to distinguish him as the soldier of America; and, on the 14th of June, 1775, all local jealousies having yielded to the enthusiasm of the time, and the policy of able advisers, Washington was chosen General and Commander-in-Chief of the armies of the United Colonies. The commission was in the names of the

delegates of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania; the counties of Newcastle, Kent, and Sussex, on Delaware; Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina; and couched in the following strong terms: "To George Washington, Esq. We, reposing special trust and confidence in your patriotism, valour, conduct, and fidelity, do, by these presents constitute and appoint you to be General and Commander-in-Chief of the army of the United Colonies, and of all the forces now raised, or to be raised by them, and of all others who shall voluntarily offer their service, and join the said army for the defence of American liberty, and for repelling every hostile invasion thereof: and you are hereby invested with full power and authority to act as you shall think for the good and welfare of the service, * * * &c." At the same time a resolution passed, declaring "Congress would maintain, assist, and adhere to him, as the Commander, for the maintenance and preservation of American liberty, with their *lives and fortunes.*"

On accepting this arduous office, Washington declined any compensation for his services; and said, he would keep a correct account of his expenses, which he should rely on Congress to discharge. The States sent addresses expressive of their approbation; but that from New-York evinced a degree of jealousy, as though they feared his personal attachment to power.

The well-known disadvantages that General Washington was about to encounter, in his undertaking of Commander-in-Chief of the American forces, in the war with England, were numerous, and such as would have appalled any other than a virtuous and *true* patriot—such as deficiency of clothing—of tents needful for an encampment—of ammunition—of engineers—and the monstrous inconvenience of receiving army supplies through various agents, not having a commissary general; add to these the want of discipline and subordination, without the practice of which it was impossible to expect success; yet the lesson was to be taught in the face of the enemy—an undertaking of infinite importance, yet one positively necessary towards obtaining the end desired. The independence of the States was declared on the 4th of July, and Washington lost no time in setting out to head the army, which he found so deficient in many respects, that having summoned a council of war, it was resolved to act on the defensive: and, as the command would be much mixed with the civil authority, Washington solicited that a committee might be appointed by Congress to consult with the Commander-in-Chief, and with the magistrates of the several

provinces, respecting the most effectual mode to be adopted in providing for and regulating the continental troops. On the arrival of Lord and Sir William Howe, before New-York, the former issued a circular to the respective Governors, announcing themselves to be commissioners delegated with authority to settle the late differences, and offering the royal pardon to the late rebels who would return to their duty.

Aware of the great inferiority in numbers of the American army, Washington, to rouse national energy, in his orders on the second of August, said : "The time is near at hand, which must determine whether Americans are to be freemen, or slaves; our cruel and unrelenting enemy has left us only the choice of a brave resistance, or the most abject submission. We have, therefore, to conquer or die."

The efforts of Washington to stimulate his soldiers, and his personal exertions to prevent the enemy from getting possession of New-York, were incessant. In the commencement of the campaign of 1776, some skirmishing took place, in which the Americans were not wholly unsuccessful; but the smallness of their numbers, and the various difficulties they laboured under, rendered it imprudent to hazard a battle. In September, the Commander-in-Chief expostulated in his letters to Congress, on the necessity of raising a permanent army, to act, at least, during the war. The period of dissolving the militia would be one of dread to the real lovers of freedom, "who cannot," the patriot continued, "but anticipate the most fatal results to their country, should it depend solely upon a militia, who were only hired for a certain period;"—and he urged every means he could suggest, to induce Congress to adopt such measures as were most likely to ensure their cause. No one ever laboured so unremittingly, so zealously, to plant the tree of freedom so deep, that its growth should prosper as the natural produce of the soil; but these efforts of the noble Washington were, at that time, fruitless!—and the British troops took possession of the city of New-York in September. On that occasion, the disaffected received the English soldiers with pleasure. The Howes issued proclamations to prohibit the troops from committing any violence towards the inhabitants; but the royal army were regardless of the order, and excited every where feelings of disgust by their insolent and contemptuous behaviour; meanwhile, the people experienced all the vicissitudes of war. The compiler of "*Historical Anecdotes relating to America*," wrote, in a letter dated New-York, February 9th, 1777, in "relating the occurrences of the previous two months, Mr. M—— gave the King's troops all the assistance in his power, for which the rebels took his cattle, and stripped his house of its

furniture, because they said he was a d——d tory. The next day the light dragoons came and took away all the provisions he had stored for the winter, because they said Mr. M—— was a d——d rebel."

At the close of 1776, the state of the American army was discouraging; many having quitted it on the expiration of their term of enlistment. Sir William Howe had gained advantage in the battle of White Plains, and every side presented a gloomy aspect. Washington, who rested his permanent hopes of victory on the justness of the cause to which he was devoted, was not to be dismayed by any difficulty; his eye was ever watchful to seize the slightest opportunity that offered, in which he could benefit that cause, and his comprehensive mind saw a plan, which he immediately put in execution. By a secret movement of his army, he contrived to cross the Delaware during the night of the 25th of December; he then marched nine miles to Trenton, where the Hessian and British troops were stationed, and having surrounded them on the heights of Dorchester, they, in surprise, threw down their arms, and Washington recrossed the Delaware, carrying with him the cannon, small arms, standards, and baggage of the enemy.

This fortuitous manœuvre had a powerful influence over the fate of the war; it brought reinforcements to the army, and was the means of expelling the British from New Jersey.

Whilst in winter-quarters, and previous to the campaign of 1777, General Washington took the precaution of having the men and the new recruits inoculated for the small-pox. Before the recommencement of hostilities, he renewed his communications to Congress, respecting the actual state of the army; repeated the inconveniences of having only militia, and enumerated the great and almost insurmountable difficulties that existed among the troops. His communications did not meet with reciprocal feelings, it being the misfortune of that body to have its interest divided by several factions; so that it acted, not on the broad basis of national benefit, but rather strayed into numerous by-paths, under the direction of individuals, who had art to conceal their limited and selfish views. This degree of apathy must have proceeded either from ignorance, as respected the military system, or from an innate bias towards economy, which sometimes led the Americans to commit great imprudences. They did not seem to have before their eyes the important truth (to use the General's own words,) that, "*where one shilling is saved in pay, a pound may be lost through mismanagement in the office.*"

On the 19th of January, 1777, the General wrote as follows to the President of Congress:—

"Sir,—The fluctuating state of an army, composed completely of militia, bids fair to reduce us to the situation in which we were some little time ago ; that is, of scarce having any army at all—unless reinforcements speedily arrive. One of the battalions from the city of Philadelphia, goes home to-day ; and the other two only remain a few days longer, upon courtesy. The time for which a country brigade under General Mifflin came out, is expired, and they stay from day to day by dint of solicitation. * * * *

* Thus you have a sketch of our present army, with which we are obliged to keep up appearances before an enemy already double to us in numbers ; and who, from every account, are withdrawing their troops from Rhode Island, to form a junction of their whole army, and make another attempt either to break up ours, or penetrate towards Philadelphia—a thing by no means difficult now, as the ice affords an easy passage over the Delaware."

In the spring of that year, it being evident by the movements of Lord Cornwallis, the leader of the royal forces, that he was preparing the army for an engagement with the Americans, Washington, who never exposed his army in battle, without ensuring, by every means in his power, the probability of victory, marched his men towards the Delaware, and prepared for the defence of Philadelphia. The battle of Brandywine followed, and was fought with vigour by both parties, on 11th of September. Each side claimed the honour of victory, which remained undecided. Among the wounded officers, was the Marquis de Lafayette, who served as a volunteer in the cause of independence. A second engagement was contemplated ; indeed, some skirmishing had commenced on the 16th, under a torrent of rain, which increased to such a degree, as to separate the contending armies. On examining the state of the American fire-arms, it was found necessary to refit them ; they were deficient also of ammunition, so that they were compelled to retreat ; and when they had provided themselves afresh, General Howe, who had commanded that division of the British army, was making his way to Philadelphia, without coming to a battle. It was the opinion of Congress, and that of the public generally, that Washington should lead his men to attack the British. But, when Washington summoned his officers to a council, it was their joint opinion that the situation of the army would not warrant such a measure, as they were undisciplined, unclothed, and nearly unfed. This determination, however, did not cause them to be inactive ; as they were unfit for a general engagement, their Commander employed their services in annoying the

enemy, and cutting off the supplies wherever they could ; and they were actively employed till the cold season set in, when, not having the convenience of tents for encampment, Washington selected an extensive range of ground, Valley Forge, on which he erected huts, made of logs and mortar, and these served as substitutes for other, and the usual comforts of encampment. The state of the army whilst in winter-quarters, was truly distressing ; as, owing to the arrangements made by Congress with the Commissary Trumbull, and which caused him to resign, the military stores were nearly exhausted. The campaign in the north, where General Gates had gained some advantage over Burgoyne's division of the royal army, had caused the enemies of Washington to pursue their malignant plans against him with some chance of success. Conway had joined Gates, and under the banner of the factious party, they treated their Commander with contempt ; although they held their commissions under his appointment, Gates did not always send a statement of his proceedings to head-quarters. When the army was suffering from want of food, occasioned by the neglect of the subordinates delegated by Congress to furnish the supplies, Washington conceived it his duty to render a faithful account to Congress. It was treated with distrust ; that body blamed the Commander for the lenity he had exercised towards his countrymen, in not forcibly seizing provisions sufficient for the support of his army. This the General explained, as not only a mode most injurious to the natives, but also one that was, on many accounts, impracticable. He continued his statements, and his opinions with the like fidelity, though his conduct did not effect the good he wished. His repeated advice to enlist regulars was also disregarded, until Congress felt its own error. The utmost that Washington could do, was to delay the surrender of Philadelphia, by annoying the enemy ; it was not in his power to do more : the city surrendered to the British, who took possession of it on the 26th September, 1777. The Congress adjourned its sitting to Lancaster.

About the same period, General Burgoyne was leading a formidable army, which had for its object to cut off the States of New-England from the confederacy. He was rash and presumptuous ; faults that betrayed him into a too great confidence as to victory. His exploits took place on the shores of the Hudson, where he was ably, and in the result, successfully opposed, by the division of the American army that was commanded by General Gates, before whom he was compelled to retreat, and to sign a convention at Saratoga, on the 17th of October, by which his army surrendered their arms and artillery to the Americans ; with a

stipulation, that the troops should return to Great Britain, on a condition not to serve again in the American war.

At the close of the campaign in 1777, the faction which at the commencement of the war had shown its virulence, in writing spurious letters in the name of the Commander-in-Chief, signifying that he did not engage heartily in his country's cause, now began to be more free in its communications; whisperings passed, and further publicity was gained, which caused a correspondence between the Generals Gates and Conway; the former of whom addressed the Commander on the 18th of December, requiring his acknowledgment by what means he had obtained an extract of General Conway's letter to him, namely, the following sentence: "*Heaven has been determined to save your country, or a weak General and bad counsellors would have ruined it.*" This letter was sent to General Washington through Congress, in January, 1778. The answer, therefore, was returned the same way. In the latter, Washington stated that, " * * * in his way to Congress, fell in with Lord Stirling, and without any injunction of secrecy, told his aid-de-camp, Major M'Williams, what Conway had written to General Gates."

Congress showed itself to be influenced by the factious party: it failed in the confidence it had promised to rest on Washington's judgment. This appeared particularly in the obstacles advanced by that body to prevent the execution of the Cartel, resolved on by Howe and Washington, relating to the exchange of prisoners; they plainly evinced that they entertained suspicions of which the commander's intentions were incapable, and his conduct showed the integrity of his mind. In his usual upright manner, he continued his good advice to Congress, and urged their submission to the engagement, on the principles of good faith, honour, and humanity. That was a crisis, which Paine notified by saying, "*these are the times that try the souls of men.*" The courage of the Americans fell; Washington stood alone erect, and surveyed, with firm composure, the storm by which he was surrounded; whilst envy and all her train were engaged in dark and slanderous machinations against him. The conspiracy harboured in its bosom, members of the Congress and officers in the army; the treacherous phalanx acquired an extent which gave them a fancied security, and the following anonymous letter was enclosed to Mr. Patrick Henry, governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia:—

"DEAR Sir:

Yorktown, January 12th, 1776.

"The common danger of our country first brought you and me together. I recollect, with pleasure, the influence of your conversation

and eloquence upon the opinions of this country, in the beginning of the present controversy. You first taught us to shake off our idolatrous attachment to royalty, and to oppose its encroachments upon our liberties, with our very lives. By these means you saved us from ruin. The independence of America is the offspring of that liberal spirit of thinking and acting, which followed the destruction of the spectres of Kings, and the mighty power of Great Britain.

“ But, Sir, we have only passed the Red Sea. A dreary wilderness is still before us, and unless a Moses or a Joshua are raised up in our behalf, we must perish before we reach the promised land. We have nothing to fear from our enemies on the way. General Howe, it is true, has taken Philadelphia; but he has only changed his prison. His dominions are bounded on all sides by his out-sentries. America can only be undone by herself. She looks up to her councils and arms for protection; but, alas! what are they? Her representation to Congress, dwindled to twenty-one members; her Adams, her Wilson, her Henry, are no more among them. Her councils weak, and only partial remedies applied for universal diseases. Her army, what is it? A major-general belonging to it, called it a few days ago, in my hearing, a *mob*. Discipline unknown, or wholly neglected. The quarter-master and commissary’s departments filled with idleness, ignorance, and speculation; our hospitals crowded with six thousand sick, but half provided with necessaries or accommodations, and more dying in them in one month, than perished in the field during the whole of the last campaign. The money depreciating, without any effectual measures being taken to raise it; the country distracted with the Don Quixote attempts to regulate the price of provisions,—an *artificial* famine created by it, and a *real* one dreaded from it; the spirit of the people failing through a more intimate acquaintance with the causes of our misfortunes; many submitting daily to General Howe, and more wishing to do it, only to avoid the difficulties which threaten our country. But is our case desperate? By no means. We have wisdom, virtue, and strength enough to save us, if they could be called into action. *The Northern army* has shown us what Americans are capable of doing, with a *General* at their head. The spirit of the Southern army is no way inferior to the spirit of the Northern. A Gates, a Lee, or a Conway, would, in a few weeks, render them an irresistible body of men. The last of the above officers has accepted of the new office of inspector-general of our army, in order to reform abuses; but the remedy is only a palliative one. In one of his letters to a friend he says, ‘A great and good God hath decreed

America to be free, or the * * * and weak counsellors, would have ruined her long ago.' You may rest *assured* of *each* of the facts prelated in this letter. The author of it is one of your Philadelphia friends. A hint of his name, if found out by the hand-writing, must not be mentioned to your most intimate friend. Even the letter *must* be thrown in the fire. But some of its contents ought to be made public, in order to awaken, enlighten, and alarm our country. I rely upon your prudence, and am, dear sir, &c."

General Washington in his reply, dated Valley Forge, March 27th, 1778, says: "The favourable light in which you hold me is truly flattering; but I should feel much regret, if I thought the happiness of America so intimately connected with my personal welfare, as you so obligingly seem to consider it. All I can say is, that she has ever had, and I trust she ever will have, my honest exertions to promote her interest. I cannot hope that my services have been the best; but my heart tells me they have been the best that I could render.

"That I may have erred in using the means in my power, for accomplishing the objects of the arduous, exalted station with which I am honoured, I cannot doubt; nor do I wish my conduct to be exempted from the reprobation it may deserve. Error is the portion of humanity; and to censure it, whether committed by this or that public character, is the prerogative of freemen.

"My caution to avoid every thing that could injure the service, prevented me from communicating, except to a very few of my friends, the intrigues of a faction which I knew was formed against me, since it might serve to publish our internal dissensions; but their own restless zeal to advance their views, has too clearly betrayed them, and made concealment on my part fruitless. I cannot precisely mark the extent of their views; but it appeared, in general, that General Gates was to be exalted on the ruin of my reputation and influence. This I am authorised to say, from undeniable facts in my own possession, that this is not the only secret, insidious attempt, that has been made to wound my reputation. There have been others equally base, cruel, and ungenerous, because conducted with as little frankness, and proceeding from views, perhaps as personally interested.

"I am, dear Sir, &c. &c.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

What could be more noble in disposition, more worthy of imitation, or conduct more strongly indicative of honest integrity, than this proceeding of Washington? who was so entirely free from any littleness of character,

that he continued the same irreproachable course—the same impartial advice to Congress. The jealousy of faction, also, continued its virulence and its mode of intrigue. Letters of an Englishman, who resided in New-York in the years 1777 and 1778, show that a party there kept up a correspondence with the English ministers, for the purpose of leading the cabinet to exercise oppressive measures against the colonists. Congress acted with inconsistency, and used delay in their decisions. That body differed from Washington in the final arrangement of the army, and still evinced too much reliance on the militia; regardless of his persevering advice to enlist regulars, he declared in a letter to the President, that "until officers consider their commissions in an honourable and interested point of view, and are afraid to endanger them by negligence and inattention, no order, regularity, or care, either of the men or public property, will prevail."

Among the reports circulated by the malice of Washington's enemies, was that of his intention to resign the office of Commander-in-Chief. On this matter, he wrote thus to a friend in England: "I can assure you, that no person ever heard me drop an expression that had a tendency to resignation. The same principles that led me to embark in opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain, operate with additional force at this day; nor is it my desire to withdraw my services while they are considered of importance in the present contest; but to report a design of this kind, is among the arts which those who are endeavouring to effect a change, are practising to bring it to pass. I have said, and I still do say, that there is not an officer in the service of the United States, that would return to the sweets of domestic life with more heart-felt joy than I should! But I would have this declaration accompanied by these sentiments, that, while the public are satisfied with these endeavours, I mean not to shrink from the cause. But the moment her voice, not that of faction, calls upon me to resign, I shall do it with as much pleasure as ever the weary traveller retired to rest."

About the same period, he addressed Congress respecting the imperative wants of the army, who were nearly without food or clothing; to that statement he added, "*With truth, I can declare, that no man, in my opinion, ever had his measures more impeded than I have, by every department of the army.*" In this sentence, the Commander alluded to the existing evil, that every officer had a notion that he conferred a favour, rather than received one by being in it; and, on the least inconvenience, he thought himself at liberty to quit it.

Washington received a letter from his friend, Mr. Laurens, the Presi-

dent of Congress, apprising him of certain accusations against him, in his office of Commander-in-Chief; to which the General replied, as follows, from camp, March, 1778:

"As I have no other view than to promote the public good, and am unambitious of honours, not founded on the approbation of my country, I would not desire, in the least degree, to suppress a free spirit of inquiry into any part of my conduct, that even faction itself may deem reprehensible. * * * *

* * * * * My enemies take an ungenerous advantage of me. They know the delicacy of my situation, and that motives of policy deprive me of the defence, I might otherwise make against their insidious attacks. They know I cannot combat their insinuations, however injurious, without disclosing secrets it is of the utmost moment to conceal. But why, should I expect to be free from censure, the unfailing lot of an elevated station? Merit and talents, which I cannot pretend to rival, have ever been subject to it. My heart tells me, it has ever been my unremitting aim, to do the best which my circumstances would permit. Yet I may have been very often mistaken in my judgment of the means, and may, in many instances, deserve the imputation of error. * * * * *

* * * On being assured last Saturday, and convinced of the certain truth, from the only commissary in the purchasing line, in this camp, that he had not a single hoof of any kind to slaughter, and not more than twenty-five barrels of flour, all I could do under these circumstances, was to send out a few light parties to watch and harass the enemy; whilst other parties were instantly detached different ways to collect, if possible, as much provision as would satisfy the present pressing wants of the soldiers; but will this answer? No, Sir. Three or four days of bad weather, would prove our destruction. What, then, is to become of the army this winter? And if we are now as often without provisions as with them, what is to become of us in the spring, when our force will be collected, with the aid perhaps of militia, to take advantage of an early campaign before the enemy can be reinforced? These are considerations of great magnitude, meriting the closest attention, and will, when my own reputation is so ultimately connected with, and to be affected by the event, justify my saying, that the present commissaries are by no means equal to the execution of the office; or that the disaffection of the people surpasses all belief." He then proceeded to observe on the result of the Congress having acted contrary to his opinion respecting the commissariat department; and

continues to say in the same letter:—"With truth I can declare, that no man, in my opinion, ever had his measures more impeded than I have.

* * * * * Notwithstanding it is a standing order (often repeated) that the troops shall have two days' provisions always by them, that they may be ready at any sudden call; yet scarcely any opportunity has offered of taking advantage of the enemy, but it has been either totally obstructed, or greatly impeded, on this account; and this, the great and crying evil, is not all! Soap, vinegar, and other articles, allowed by Congress, we see none of; nor have we seen them, I believe, since the battle of Brandywine. The first, indeed we have little occasion for; few men having more than one shirt, many only the moiety of one, and some none at all. * * * * *

* * * * * We have by a field return, this day made, no less than two thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight men, now in camp, unfit for duty, because they are barefoot, and otherwise naked."

To the above were added other statements, none of which were in the least exaggerated. However, the Congress had not neglected to adopt the best measures they could, to provide the army with clothes; but the non-importation agreement had lessened the quantity of goods, and home manufactures did not equal the consumption.

The General continued to urge the necessity of recruiting, and sent to each state a correct return of its troops on continental establishment, that each province might know its deficiency. Congress deputed a committee to reside in the camp, and to make their report of the state of the army, and they arrived in January, 1778.

At this period the army seemed to have reached the acmé of distress; for, although the committee found the troops even in a worse case than they had been represented, still Congress persisted in their desire to keep the subordinate agents under the immediate dependence of their body. It is but justice to observe, that it was due to the sincere attachment and high esteem which the officers and soldiers maintained and felt towards their Commander, that alone prevented the dissolution of the army. Happily too, for America, the condition of Washington was not understood by Sir William Howe, who, had he determined on an attack, would doubtless have driven the Americans out of their camp.

General Clinton succeeded Sir William Howe in the command of the loyalist army. In the battle of Monmouth, Washington proved himself a great and able general, and received the thanks of Congress for his conduct on that occasion. General Conway having received a wound in battle, that was supposed dangerous, he addressed the following note to General Washington, July 23d, 1778: "My career will soon

be over, therefore, justice and truth prompt me to declare my last sentiments. You are, in my eyes, the great and good man. May you long enjoy the love, veneration and esteem of those states, whose liberties you have asserted by your virtues.

“ I am with the greatest respect, Sir, &c., &c.

“ P. CONWAY.”

On the 6th of June, Lord Cornwallis, Lord Carlisle, Governor Johnston, and Wm. Eden, Esq., arrived in Pennsylvania, with proposals of reconciliation from England, grounded on an union of the two nations, and under one sovereign; on this matter, bribery was had recourse to; it even made its way to Congress. (Mr. Read, in reply to an application made to him, said, he was not worth purchasing; nevertheless, such as he was, the King of England was not rich enough to do it. A plan, in which France then joined, was proposed for the invasion of Canada; but Washington, aware of its impracticability, went to Philadelphia to hold an interview with Congress, to whom he explained the reasons of his advice; and the members, convinced of his right judgment, gave up the plan. The English commissioners proceeded in the attempt to conciliate the parties, and issued circulars to each State, holding out pardons to such as would return to their loyalty. This scheme entirely failed of success. In Congress a plan was concerted for making war on the Indian nations, who had inflicted serious injuries on the western frontiers of America. These were under the protection of Britain, and many loyalists had taken refuge among them; when, however, the army destined to act in this expedition were assembled, such discontent appeared as threatened the dissolution of the army, or at best, the resignation of its officers, as soon as others could be found willing to take their places. When Washington was apprised of the circumstance, he expressed his sentiments fully to General Maxwell, acknowledged his consciousness of their patience and perseverance, said that their conduct under difficulties, of a most trying and personal nature, had been such as to gain them honour at home and abroad, and had inspired him with an unlimited confidence in their virtue; and added, men who had not been outdone in the qualities of citizens and soldiers, could not seriously intend any thing that would be a stain on their former reputation, and he flattered himself they would recall those inconsiderate resolutions, and would regret they had ever been mentioned. The officers, with all deference to the virtues and abilities of their Commander-in-Chief, replied, that they had lost all confidence in the legislature, as their frequent memorials for the arrears of pay remained unnoticed. “ Few of us,” they continued, “ have private

fortunes ; many have families, who already are suffering every thing that can be received from an ungrateful country." Yet they would not disobey their commander, but persevered in their intention to serve no longer, than until others could be found willing to supply their places.

Washington, who saw clearly the errors into which faction had brought his countrymen, said, in a letter which he wrote to a friend in the beginning of the year 1779 : " To me it appears no unjust simile to compare the affairs of this great continent to the mechanism of a clock, each state representing some one or other of the smaller parts of it, which they are endeavouring to put in fine order, without considering how useless and unavailing their labour is, unless the great wheel, or spring, which is to set the whole in motion, is also well attended to, and kept in good order. I allude to no particular State, but as it is a fact too notorious to be concealed, that Congress is rent by party ; that much business of a trifling nature, and personal concernment, withdraws their attention from matters of great national moment at this critical period ; when it is also known that idleness and dissipation, take place of close attention and application, no man who wishes well to the liberties of this country, and desires to see its rights established, can avoid crying out,—Where are our men of abilities ? Why do they not come forward to save their country ? Let this voice, my dear Sir, call upon you, Jefferson, and others."

The movements of the enemy's army along the Hudson, caused the Americans to be very active. The principal division, with the Commander-in-Chief, once more raised their hut encampment, and passed the winter, from December, near Morristown. Still the endeavours of those members of Congress, who aimed to fix Independence on the firmest basis, were continually opposed by the party whose jealousy led them to dread a too strong adhesion to power, so that, possessing the means, Congress did not possess the necessary confidence in its own body, to secure it, and when the campaign of 1780 came to a close, the condition of the men was no way improved ; the army had neither meat nor flour, —the progressive depreciation of the currency had, in a great measure, occasioned this depressed state of things, which had come to so critical a point, as obliged the Commissary to inform General Washington that he had no money, and his credit was exhausted. In this emergency, the General required of the different counties to send meat and flour in proportion to their respective resources, for an immediate supply. The merchants and residents of Philadelphia were foremost to contribute a large sum of money, with which a bank was established for the supply of the army. The ladies cheerfully underwent privations to render their

assistance, and sent gratuities for the private soldiers, and the anniversary of American Independence was observed with great splendor. The spirit was adopted by the females generally; at Baltimore they made up clothing for the soldiers, and the Marquis de Lafayette, who felt a strong interest in the welfare of the States, made a journey to Paris for the purpose of engaging the aid of his Christian Majesty on behalf of the infant Republic of America. At Boston an academy was established for the cultivation of every art and science, that could advance the interest and dignity of a virtuous people. Meanwhile the cause suffered from the peculiar state of the army, and the continual fluctuation of the men, many of whom engaged only for a short period, barely sufficient to initiate them in the art of war, and then were succeeded by new and raw young men, just when the former ones had begun to understand discipline, and set a right value on its effects. A plan of half pay was proposed and granted by Congress, as a means of reward to those who renewed their engagements, and continued their services. In the summer of 1781, a fleet with troops from France, under the command of Admiral Count de Grasse, arrived most opportunely, for the honour of America. The following extract from the Commander-in-Chief's Journal will show how opportunely:

"1781, May 1st. Instead of having an arsenal well supplied with military stores, they are poorly provided, and the workmen all leaving them. Instead of having the various articles of field equipage in readiness to deliver, the quarter-master-general is but now applying to the several States (as a dernier resort) to provide these things for their respective troops. Instead of having a regular system of transportation established upon credit, or funds in the quarter-master's hands to defray the contingent expenses of it, we have neither one nor the other; and all that business, or a great part of it, being done by military impressment, we are daily and hourly oppressing the people, souring their tempers, and alienating their affections. Instead of having the regiments completed, there is little prospect of ever getting more than half. In a word, instead of having every thing in readiness for taking the field, we have nothing."

An obstinate battle was fought at the Eutaw-Springs on the 8th of September; it lasted four hours, and was so nearly equal in point of bravery, and its alternate succession of victory and loss, that the advantage was claimed by both parties, without either being pronounced the final conqueror. After that engagement, the thanks of Congress were sent to the army, and Major General Greene received a British standard and a golden medal in honour of his merit. The provincial militia at this time fought with all the spirit and perseverance of old and well-

tried soldiers ; the bayonet, which formerly was dreaded, now had become their favourite weapon. The army, though harassed by fatigue, and suffering continued privations, seemed to gather fresh energy from its experience. The revenge of the royalists went sometimes so far as to occasion the murder of many who were prisoners, and whose known patriotism caused them to be regarded as enemies. In order to prevent retaliation, the American General issued an order, to execute the man who should kill another after he had been made a prisoner.

Lord Rawdon having gone back to England in ill health, the command of the British troops in South Carolina was committed to Lieutenant-Colonel Stuart.

Very great dissatisfaction prevailed through the American army at this period, but particularly with the troops from Pennsylvania, who had undergone less hardships than the others, but who refused to remain longer without receiving their arrears of pay, and actually marched out of camp ; but when General Clinton sent favourable proposals to them, they spurned his offers with contempt. Proposals of an amicable adjustment arrived from England in the beginning of 1782. These Washington begged of Congress to receive with great caution, as he plainly saw it was not then intended to acknowledge the independence of the United States, without which, as the basis, the Commander-in-Chief considered any overture nothing more than a design to lull the Americans into a false security. Congress saw the advantage of his advice, and issued its determination of adhering to its former treaty, not to make a separate peace with England ; and refused to enter into the discussion of any overtures, but in confidence, and in concert with the King of France. From the doubtful state as to the intention of the English parliament, (many of its members being known to be greatly averse to the continuance of the war, as occasioning an immense waste of money) —the precaution adopted by the French to prevent a separate treaty— and the firm determination of Congress to maintain their Declaration of Independence, the two armies remained inactive the greatest part of the year 1782. The cessation of hostilities rendered it a matter of indifference whether Washington remained in the camp or not ; but he, who knew the uneasy state of the soldiers, stopped to watch over their movements. Though a resolution had been passed by Congress in 1780, granting half-pay for life to the officers employed in the war, no specific fund was appropriated to the payment ; so that in proportion as negotiations for peace advanced, the officers felt their anxiety increase respecting their personal situation. Their Commander thus expressed his sentiments to a friend, in a letter from Morristown : " When I see

a number of men goaded by a thousand stings of reflection on the past, and of anticipation regarding the future, about to be returned to the world—soured by penury, and what they call the ingratitude of the public—involved in debts, without one farthing of money to carry them home—after having spent the flower of their days, and many of them their patrimonies, in establishing the freedom and independence of their country ; and having suffered every thing which human nature is capable of enduring on this side of death. When I reflect on these irritating circumstances, unattended by one thing to soothe their feelings, or brighten the gloomy prospect, I cannot avoid apprehending that a train of evils will follow, of a very serious and alarming nature."

The designs of Lord Cornwallis, who commanded the royalist army, being completely frustrated by the conduct of the American troops, aided by the French, under the Commander-in-Chief, General Washington—the garrisons of New-York and Gloucester Point having been ceded, with the arms, ammunition, and public stores of every description, to Washington ; and the ships and seamen to Admiral de Grasse, to be added to the forces of America, the contest ended with the consent of the King of England to acknowledge the Thirteen United States, as a sovereign and independent power.

During the winter of 1782, the different political parties were busily preparing to bring about their different plans ; but a division of opinion regarding the army was a principal object of discussion. The officers deputed a committee from among themselves to carry a petition to Congress in December, which remained unnoticed at the end of February, 1783, when a rumour reached the camp that the eventual articles of peace had been fixed, and, in a few days after, it was announced that they had been signed by the ministers of England and America.

On the 10th of March, an anonymous address was circulated among the officers, which had for its object to instil into their minds that their Commander-in-Chief was wholly careless of their interest. It summoned them to an early meeting to concert on the most proper measures to be adopted ; and by the most subtle and mischievous reasoning, endeavoured to draw them to act treasonably, to possess themselves of land, and, in defiance of the Legislature, take the establishment of their fortunes into their own hands.

I cannot refrain from observing the talent and eloquence brought forward in this address ; and likewise the honesty and firmness with which it was met.

Washington, with his wonted prudence and foresight, impelled too, by a strong affection for his fellow-labourers in the field of glory, noticed

in his military order the anonymous paper, and expressed his opinion, that the good sense of the officers would prevent them from paying any attention to such an irregular invitation. He requested the general and field officers, with one officer from each company, to assemble on the 15th, to hear the report of their own committee, deputed by the army to Congress, who would devise, after mature deliberation, what measures would be best towards obtaining the object they had in view.

At the meeting, held on the 15th of March, the chair was taken by General Gates, and the Commander-in-Chief addressed the officers in an appropriate speech, and with affectionate earnestness, exposed to them the insidious intentions of the writer, who had taken this disgraceful mode of exciting their irritated feelings. Having given them much candid and salutary advice, he concluded with the following delineation of his own sentiments:—

“ For myself, a recollection of the cheerful assistance and prompt obedience I have experienced from you, under every vicissitude of fortune, and the sincere affection I feel for an army I have so long had the honour to command, will oblige me to declare in this public and solemn manner, that in the attainment of complete justice for all your toils and dangers, and in the gratification of every wish, so far as may be done consistently with the great duty I owe my country, and those powers we are bound to respect, you may freely command my services to the utmost extent of my abilities.”

That meeting was held on the 15th of March; many resolutions were passed, which Washington forwarded to Congress, accompanied by a letter from himself to the President; it was written in the honest plain language of truth, and contained a fair statement of facts, as the following extract will show:—

“ If the whole army have not merited whatever a grateful people can bestow, than have I been beguiled by prejudice, and built opinion on the basis of error. If this country should not in the event perform every thing which has been requested in the late memorial to Congress, then will my belief become vain, and the hope that has been excited void of foundation. If the officers of the army are to be the only sufferers in the revolution; if, retiring from the field, they are to grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt; if they are to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honour, then shall I have learned what ingratitude is; then shall I have realized a tale which will embitter every moment of my future life.” * * *

* * * “ I hope I need not, on this momentous occasion,

make any new protestations of disinterestedness, having ever renounced for myself the idea of pecuniary reward. The consciousness of having attempted faithfully to perform my duty, and the approbation of my country, will be a sufficient recompense for my services."

This proceeding was followed by the consent of Congress to commute the half-pay into a sum, in gross, equal to five years' pay; but when the cessation of hostilities was publicly proclaimed on the 19th of April, the treasury was entirely empty; and though long arrears of pay to the army were due, both officers and men were compelled to return home without money! Their general conduct on that occasion reflects great honour on the American character; and it was well known that the virtue then exercised by the army had its rise in the strong attachment they bore to their commander.

On the 18th of June, 1783, General Washington issued a circular, which he sent from head-quarters, Newburgh, to the Governors of the separate States. In that he says,

"The great object for which I had the honour to hold an appointment in the service of my country, being accomplished, I am now preparing to resign it into the hands of Congress, and return to that domestic retirement for which I have never ceased to sigh through a long and painful absence, in which I meditate to pass the remainder of life in a state of undisturbed repose; but before I carry this resolution into effect, I think it a duty incumbent on me to make this my last official communication, to congratulate you on the glorious events which Heaven has been pleased to produce in our favour, and to offer my sentiments respecting some important subjects, which appear to me to be intimately connected with the tranquillity of the United States.

"When we consider the magnitude of the prize we contended for, the doubtful nature of the contest, and the favourable manner in which it has terminated, we shall find the greatest possible reason for gratitude and rejoicing; whether we view the event in a natural, a political, or moral point of view.

"The citizens of America, placed in the most enviable condition, as the sole lords and proprietors of a vast tract of continent, comprehending all the various soils and climates of the world, and abounding in all the necessaries and conveniences of life, are now, by the late satisfactory pacification, acknowledged to be possessed of absolute freedom and independency; and are, from this period, to be considered as the actors on a most conspicuous theatre. The foundation of our empire is laid at an epocha when the rights of mankind are better understood and more clearly defined than at any former period; researches of the

human mind after social happiness have been carried to a great extent. The treasures of knowledge acquired by the labours of philosophers, sages, and legislators, through a long succession of years, are laid open for use, and their collected wisdom may be happily applied in the establishment of our forms of government: the free cultivation of letters, the unbounded extension of commerce, the progressive refinement of manners, the growing liberality of sentiment, and, above all, the pure and benign light of revelation have had a meliorating influence on mankind, and increased the blessings of society. At this auspicious period the United States came into existence as a nation, and if their citizens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own.

“ Notwithstanding the cup of blessing is thus held out to us,—notwithstanding happiness is ours, if we have a disposition to seize the occasion and make it our own; yet it appears to me there is an option still left to the United States of America, whether they will be respectable and prosperous, or contemptible and miserable as a nation;—this is the time of their political probation,—this is the moment, when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon them,—this is the moment to establish or ruin their national character for ever,—this is the favourable moment to give such a tone to the federal government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution; or this may be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and exposing us to become the sport of European politics, which may play one State against another, to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes. For, according to the system of policy the States shall adopt at this moment, they will stand or fall; and, by their confirmation or lapse, it is yet to be decided, whether the revolution must be ultimately considered as a blessing or a curse,—a blessing or a curse, not to the present age alone, for with our fate will the destiny of unborn millions be involved.

“ With this conviction of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime; I will, therefore, speak to your Excellency the language of freedom and sincerity, without disguise.

“ There are *four* things which I humbly conceive are essential to the well-being, I may even venture to say, to the existence of the United States as an independent power:

- “ 1st. Indissoluble union of the States under one head.
- “ 2d. A sacred regard to public justice.
- “ 3d. The adoption of a proper peace establishment; and

" 4th. The prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies, to make those mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity, and, in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community.

" These are the pillars on which the glorious fabric of our independency and national character must be supported. Liberty is the basis, and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretexts he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration, and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country.

" Under the first head: unless the States will suffer Congress to exercise those prerogatives they are undoubtedly invested with by the constitution, every thing must very rapidly tend to anarchy and confusion.

" That it is indispensable to the happiness of the individual States, that there should be lodged, somewhere, a supreme power, to regulate and govern the general concerns of the confederated republic, without which the union cannot be of long duration.

" That whatever measures have a tendency to dissolve the union, or contribute to violate or lessen the sovereign authority, ought to be considered as hostile to the liberty and independency of America, and the authors of them treated accordingly. And lastly, that unless we can be enabled, by the concurrence of the States, to participate of the fruits of the revolution, and enjoy the essential benefits of civil society, under a form of government so free and uncorrupted, so happily guarded against the danger of oppression, as has been devised and adopted by the articles of confederation, it will be a subject of regret, that so much blood and treasure have been lavished for no purpose; that so many sufferings have been encountered without a compensation, and that so many sacrifices have been made in vain. Many other considerations might here be adduced to prove, that without an entire conformity to the spirit of the Union, we cannot exist as an independent power. It will be sufficient for my purpose to mention but one or two, which seem to me of the greatest importance. It is only in our united character as an empire, that our independence is acknowledged, that our power can be regarded, or our credit supported among foreign nations. The treaties of the European powers with the United States of America, will have no validity on the dissolution of the Union.

" As to the second article, which respects the performance of public justice, the ability of the country to discharge the debts which have been incurred in its defence, is not to be doubted. An inclination, I

flatter myself, will not be wanting ; the path of our duty is plain before us ; honesty will be found, on every experiment, to be the best and only true policy. Let us, then, as a nation, be just ; let us fulfil the public contracts which Congress had undoubtedly a right to make for the purpose of carrying on the war, with the same good faith we suppose ourselves bound to perform our private engagements. In the meantime, let an attention to the cheerful performance of their proper business, as individuals, and as members of society, be earnestly inculcated on the citizens of America ; then will they strengthen the bands of government, and be happy under its protection. Every one will reap the fruit of his labours ; every one will enjoy his own acquisitions, without molestation and without danger.”

The retiring Commander pointed out the strong merits of the men who had served under him, saying, “ The complicated difficulties and embarrassments in which our affairs were involved, would have long ago produced the dissolution of any army, less patient, less virtuous, and less persevering, than that which I have had the honour to command.

“ I have here freely disclosed what I wished to make known, before I surrendered up my public trust to those who committed it to me. The task is now accomplished ; I now bid adieu to your Excellency, as the Chief Magistrate of your State ; at the same time, I bid a last farewell to the cares of office, and all the employments of public life.

“ It remains, then, to be my final and only request, that your Excellency will communicate these sentiments to your Legislature at their next meeting ; and that they may be considered as the legacy of one who has ardently wished, on all occasions, to be useful to his country, and who, even in the shade of retirement, will not fail to implore the Divine benediction upon it.

“ I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the State over which you preside, in his holy protection ; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government ; to entertain a brotherly love and affection for each other, for their fellow-citizens of the United States at large ; and particularly for their brethren who have served in the field ; and, finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of the mind, which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, without an humble

imitation of whose example, in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation.

“ I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

“ To his Excellency Wm. Greene, Esq., Governor
of the State of Rhode Island.”

On the 25th of November General Washington, accompanied by General Clinton, made his public entry into the city of New-York, and on the 3d of December he took an affectionate leave of the army, and on the following day commenced his journey to Annapolis, for the purpose of resigning his commission into the hands of Congress; but stopped at Philadelphia to settle his account with the Comptroller there. All was in his own handwriting, and done with the utmost regularity, up to the 13th of December. In a folio M.S. book, No. 3700, on the file of the Treasury office, are the bills, with all the corresponding vouchers.

General Washington's account, from June, 1775,

to the end of June,	1783,	16,311	17	1
From July 1st, 1783, to December 13th,		1,717	5	4
Added afterwards from that date to December,		213	8	4
Mrs. Washington's travelling expenses coming and returning to the General,		1,064	1	0
		19,306	11	9

In the General's handwriting, is a note signifying that he was a considerable loser. “ My disbursements,” he wrote, “ falling a good deal short of my receipts, and the money I had upon hand of my own. Through hurry, I suppose, I know not how else to account for the deficiency, I have omitted to charge the same, whilst every debt against me is here credited. July 1st, 1783.”

General Washington reached Annapolis on the 19th of December, and finding it was the wish of Congress to receive their honoured Chief with all possible respect, he gave in his resignation in a full assembly on the 23d, and then proceeded to his retirement at Mount Vernon. There addresses from the several States followed him; Congress passed a resolution to erect a statue to commemorate his exploits,—an example that was followed in Virginia. Few persons have experienced the real enjoyment which Washington expressed himself to feel in his rural employments. A few days after his arrival at Mount Vernon, he thus describes his thoughts in a letter to his friend Lafayette:

“ At length, my dear Marquis, I have become a private citizen on the

banks of the Potomac, and under the shadow of my own vine, and my own fig tree, free from the bustle of a camp, and the busy scenes of public life. I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments, of which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame—the statesman, whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe was insufficient for us all—and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince, in the hope of catching a gracious smile—can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life, with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers."

He then acknowledges the force of habit; that he is disposed to ruminate, on awaking in the morning, on the probable business of the day, and ends with, "I feel, as I conceive a wearied traveller must do, who after treading many a painful step with a heavy burden on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed; and from his house top is looking back, and tracing with an eager eye, the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way, and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling."

By a strict division of his time, the Patriot was able to ameliorate the state of agriculture, and to effect many projects that proved beneficial to his country. One principal object of his labour was the improvement of commerce by the navigation of the rivers. Nature, he said, had been so partial a parent to the country, that the more it was explored, the more it would rise in estimation, and he spared neither trouble nor expense to establish an easy intercourse between the western and the eastern territory; and soon his occupations became so numerous, that he found it necessary to engage a secretary. In 1784, the Society of the Cincinnati was formed, of which he was elected President. Its object was the preservation of the rights and liberties of human nature; and, though not exclusively confined to military men, its greatest number had fought and bled in the cause;—they were distinguished by their adoption of the American Eagle.

During a long period that conflicting parties delayed the adoption of the Constitution, the citizens of Boston practised the greatest fidelity

it. It was then that a series of essays appeared in a New-York paper ; they were replete with sound arguments, founded on principles of reason and justice, and were conducted by three talented and able writers, Colonel Hamilton, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Jay. The object of these essays was to expose real facts, real dangers, and to detect misrepresentation ; they form two volumes, under the title of " **THE FEDERALIST.**"

The dissatisfied state of America showed itself more and more after the disbanding of the army, and the evil increased to an alarming height between the years 1783 and 1786. The right assumed by each party to form assemblies, in which each person expressed his own conception as to a form of government, created a state of confusion which can alone be imagined by those who have witnessed a disorganized faction, without any head to direct its movements. Governor Randolph, the sincere friend of America, wrote his sentiments to General Washington, in the hope of inducing that great man to add his influence at the meeting of Delegates from the separate States, about to be held at Philadelphia. " This gloomy prospect," said the Governor, in his letter to Washington, " still admits one ray of hope ; that those who began, carried on, and consummated the revolution, can yet rescue America from the impending ruin."

" For God's sake, tell me," said Washington, in addressing his friend Colonel Humphries, " what is the cause of all these commotions ? Do they proceed from licentiousness, British influence, disseminated by the Tories, or real grievances, which admit of redress ? If the latter, why was redress delayed until the public mind had become so much agitated ? If the former, why are not the powers of government tried at once ? It is as well to be without, as not to exercise them. Commotions of this sort, like snow-balls, gather strength as they roll, if there is no opposition in the way to divide and crumble them." The patriot was grieved at the state of things ; he was surprized, and declared, that in his late, but short period of retreat from public life, he had no notion that his countrymen could have acted on such false principles, for he could not shut his eyes to the fact, that a strong party were labouring to undo what it had cost him and others so much to effect ; and that their leaders were desirous for a re-union with Britain. In this state of things, Governor Boudoin, acting by the advice of council, raised a militia of 4000 men, but the treasury was unable to support them, upon which the gentlemen of Boston supplied the means ; and this army, in defence of the commonwealth, began its operations under the command of the veteran General Lincoln, and, in a short time, and with very little bloodshed, completely

overcame the insurgents. This step was followed by the Convention of Delegates held at Philadelphia.

To his friend, Mr. Jay, who expressed his hopes that he who had done so much would not refuse his aid to extricate America from her present difficulties, General Washington replied: "Retired as I am from the world, I frankly acknowledge I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet, having happily assisted in bringing the ship into port, and having been fairly discharged, it is not my business to embark again on a sea of troubles."

Reluctant as the General was to leave his retreat, he was, it may be said, compelled to do it, since it became evident that none but himself had sufficient weight, talent, and industry, to conduct the federal government, and to secure the union of the States. Diversity of opinions had brought America into imminent danger—the hero who had won her freedom felt it incompatible with his nature to see her lose it; he therefore yielded the enjoyments of Mount Vernon, to enter once more on the great stage of public action.

Washington joined the meeting of delegates, and found great differences arose from the different States regarding their situation, extent, habits, and local interests. In their several deliberations the consolidation of their union was the chief point kept in view, as involving their prosperity, felicity, safety, and perhaps, their existence as a nation. On the 17th of September, 1787, the articles of the new Constitution was submitted to the approval of Congress by the President, General Washington; who stated the contents to be the result of a spirit of amity, and of mutual deference and concession on the part of the representatives of the several States of the new Republic.

During General Washington's residence at Mount Vernon, the assembled Legislature of Virginia and Maryland met respecting the opening navigation of the Potomac and James Rivers. On that occasion the treasurer received instructions to subscribe a number of shares from each company in the name of "*George Washington, Esq., in testimony of the estimation in which they held his unexampled merit, in his arduous labours for his country. Wishing that those great works of improvement, springing from the liberty which he had been instrumental to establish, and which he had encouraged by his patronage, might prove durable monuments of his glory, and also of the gratitude of his country.*

In the explanation given by the General as to the reason why he declined to accept the gift, he says: "It is really my wish to have my mind and my actions, which are the result of reflection, as free and inde-

pendent as the air ; that I may be more at liberty to express my sentiments, and if necessary, to suggest what may occur to me, under the fullest conviction that, although my judgment may be arraigned, there will be no suspicion that sinister motives had the smallest influence in the suggestion. * * * When I was first called to the station with which I was honoured during the late conflict for our liberties, to the diffidence which I had so many reasons to feel in accepting it, I thought it my duty to join a firm resolution to shut my hand against every pecuniary recompense. To this resolution I have invariably adhered, and from it (if I had the inclination) I do not think myself at liberty now to depart."

From his retreat at Mount Vernon, Washington saw the difficulties which continued to multiply in the formation of the new Republic ; he saw with deep interest and concern that all the obstacles proceeded from the operation of two great political parties—the friends and the foes to the measure—each using equal exertions, as interest in some, and honesty in others, propelled the leaders of these parties ; all of whom, by their petty jealousies, kept Ameriea in a ferment. At this time the friends of this great man were daily urging him to take the lead in the government of the States, and at length, a desire to extricate his country from the embarrassment it laboured under, and from a wish to establish a permanent system of policy, he resolved once more to sacrifice private enjoyment to public benefit, and thus replied to a letter from Lafayette :

" Should it really become necessary for me to fill the station in which your letter pre-supposes me, I have determined to go into it perfectly free from all engagements of every nature whatsoever: A conduct in conformity with this resolution would enable me, in balancing the varioru pretensions of different candidates for appointments, to act with a sole reference to justice and the public good. I am sensible that the public suffrage that places a man in office should prevent him from being swayed in the execusion of it by his private inclinations, yet he may assuredly, without violating his duty, be indulged in the continuance of his former attachments.

In March, 1789, George Washington was elected President, and John Adams, Vice President, of the United States. On going to this honour the General avows his feelings are those of a criminal going to execusion ; so unwilling was he to quit the joys of retirement for an ocean of difficulties. " Integrity and firmness," he continued, in a letter to General Knox, " are all I can promise ; these, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me, although I may be deserted by all men ; for of the

consolations which are to be derived from these, under my circumstances, the world cannot deprive me."

On the 16th of April, 1789, he wrote in his diary, "About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity, and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New-York—with the best dispositions to render service to my country, in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

Triumphal arches were erected on the road, and every demonstration of honour, respect, and affection, were offered to him; each town through which he passed vied with the other in these marks of affection. At Trenton, in particular, the female sex prepared their tribute of deep gratitude in remembrance of their happy deliverance from the enemy twelve years before. Over the creek was a bridge, on which was erected a triumphal arch, supported by thirteen pillars, ornamented with laurels and flowers, with these words on the central arch :—

"The Defender of the Mothers will be the Protector of the Daughters."

Here a procession of females met him singing the following stanzas :

Welcome, mighty chief, once more,

Welcome to this grateful shore;

Now, no mercenary foe, aims again the fatal blow,

Aims at thee the fatal blow,

Virgins fair and matrons grave,

Those thy conquering arms did save

Build for thee triumphal bowers; strew, ye fair, his way with flowers;

Strew your Hero's way with flowers.

On quitting New-Jersey, the President was met by a Committee from Congress, that accompanied him to New-York, for which city he embarked in a barge manned by thirteen branch pilots, and arrived there on the 23rd of April; and was inaugurated on the 30th.

Soon after the government came into operation, the newly appointed office of President caused some suspicion and doubts, relative to the regal manners, as they were called, of those who were at the head of the government. Upon this being noticed to General Washington, he replied, that he should like to know the public opinion of men and measures, and of none more than of what related to himself; for, he continued, "the man who means to commit no wrong will never be guilty of enormities; consequently, can never be unwilling to learn what are ascribed to him as foibles. If they are really such, the knowledge of them in a well disposed mind will go half way towards a reform. If they are not errors, he can explain and justify his actions,"

Much of the time during the first session was occupied in preliminary arrangements respecting the government, and concerting measures of a public nature.

The commencement of the 2d session, in January 1790, found the party who opposed government exercising the same fluctuations of weakness and power, as are common in all bodies which are formed merely on the principle of self-interest; and which must end in the destruction of that which proves the least powerful. Washington never deviated from the course that his conscience dictated to be just; his love of method caused a uniformity in his habits, which prevented the smallest appearance of inconsistency throughout his conduct. He laid down rules for himself which he thought best suited to the high station he filled; and finding that occasional visits intruded too much on his time, he fixed a period to receive calls; this was from three o'clock to four every Tuesday, and he was present at Mrs. Washington's tea-parties on Friday evenings. These arrangements, however, were condemned as bearing too much resemblance to regal institutions; so jealous was the opposition party lest the government might acquire too great an influence. Never was a man so calculated as Washington to be at the head of the affairs of America at that period. His private fortune enabled him to resign every pecuniary compensation, his mind was above the influence of popular favour; he devoted his whole time to the service of the state, and he acted under a conscientious observance of what was due to God, to himself, and to his country.

In March, 1793, Washington was elected a second time to fill the President's chair, and during that time his labours to benefit America were incessant. He concluded a treaty of peace between the States and Algiers; another treaty with Spain respecting navigation; and induced Great Britain to sign the agreement to withdraw their troops from all places within the boundary lines, as assigned in their general treaty. Such was the position of the United States, that on the 8th of December, 1795, the President, Washington, called forth the joyful congratulations of the member of Congress, for the many and extraordinary blessings they enjoyed; among them he enumerated the mutual satisfaction experienced in their foreign alliances. In treating on their several enjoyments, he contrasted the state of their favoured country with that of England, then suffering under the penalties of war, bloodshed, and an additional weight of taxation; whilst our agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, prosper beyond former precedent. As the period of the presidency drew near its close, Washington thought he saw the fit time

for returning to his beloved retirement, which he had quitted only to render what service he could to his country. America seemed now to be fixed in her policy, and other circumstances rendered it not deficient in patriotism to resign an office, which increasing years made it desirable to quit.

The hold which Washington had of the affections of the Americans *generally*, made them hope that he would again fill the chair as chief magistrate; but it was the design, as it had long been the wish of this truly great man, to resign that seat, and for which event he prepared a valedictory address, in which the great leading feature, the principle towards which he drew their attention the most frequently, and with the greatest degree of earnestness, was *unity of government*. In delineating the baneful effects of party spirit, Washington observes,—

“ This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all governments, more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.”

“ The Union of the States,” he says, “ is a main pillar in the edifice of your independence,—the support of your tranquillity at home,—your peace abroad,—of your safety,—of your prosperity,—of that very liberty which you so highly prize. As this is the point in your political fortress, against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be constantly and actively (though covertly and insidiously) directed, it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness;—that you should regard it as the palladium of your political safety and prosperity,—watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety, —discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can in any event be abandoned,—and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of any attempt to alienate any portion of your country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together its various parts.”

On Washington’s retirement from the office of President, in December, 1796, the merchants of Philadelphia gave a splendid banquet, to which he was invited, and was met by the general officers in the late army, the heads of departments, foreign ministers, and other distinguished persons.

Numerous were the calumnies by which the President’s character was aspersed. To crown their perfidy, his enemies said he had drawn

out of the treasury for his private use,—an impeachment was publicly suggested. From an investigation into the treasury accounts, it appeared that the President had never touched any part, for that the whole was received and disbursed by the gentleman who superintended the expenses of his household.

It had been the wish of France, even at the time her assistance to America led to a widely different opinion, that she might not establish an independent constitution, so that, after the death of Louis the Sixteenth, the commissioner appointed by that monarch was recalled, and in his place came Citizen Genet, a vain, presumptuous man, who allowed himself to be misled by the party that opposed the American government, and acted most offensively towards it. Setting aside all observance of respect, he exchanged the character of a diplomatist for that of an angry and violent individual. The President he set at defiance. The latter circumstance could not influence the President, who on one occasion only noticed the insults offered to administration. In a letter to General Lee, Governor of Virginia, dated July 21st, 1793, Washington concluded the subject by saying,

“ For the result, as it respects myself, I care not. I have a consolation within, of which no earthly efforts can deprive me, and that is, that neither ambitious, nor interested motives, have influenced my conduct. The arrows of malevolence, therefore, however barbed and pointed, can never reach my most valuable part; though, whilst I am up as a *mark*, they will be continually aimed at me.”

The conduct of Genet required that he should be recalled. Mr. Adams was elected President, 4th March, 1797, and General Washington retired to his seat at Mount Vernon, where he once more resumed his favourite occupations, among which was the correspondence he kept up with a few select friends. In the latter number he was always pleased with the communications of Sir John Sinclair, on his favourite science of agriculture.

It was the ardent wish of Washington that nothing might occur to call him again into public life. Though his time was spent in rural pursuits, his wishes were ever strongly bent on the welfare of his country, he had delivered to Congress all the papers relating to the subject of the differences which subsisted between the United States and the Republic of France; and felt the justice of the President Adams' recommendation to the Americans, that they ought to use every caution not to be drawn into an unnecessary war; at the same time, that they should hold themselves prepared for self-defence. Nor was it long be-

fore this venerable hero was again required to give his services, as commander of the American army. Mr. Adams had endeavoured to bring the French to an amicable adjustment, and sent envoys to Paris for that purpose, but they were not received by the Directory; and in their private interviews with M. Talleyrand and his agents, (one of whom was a lady,) the only object seemed money, peace might have been purchased. The interest of the minister too was fixed at a high price, in the dishonourable way of a private *douceur*. The Americans were plain dealers, and spurned the conditions with contempt,—a war therefore ensued. On the 17th of July, 1798, Washington received the appointment of Lieutenant-General and Commander-in-Chief of the army in the service of the United States. Soon after the appointment he wrote the following letter to Dr. James Anderson:—

“ December 10th, 1798.

“ I little imagined when I took my last leave of public life, and retired to the shades of my vine and fig-tree, that any event would arise *in my day* that would bring me again on a public theatre; but the unjust, ambitious, and intoxicated conduct of France towards these United States has been, and continues to be such, that they must be opposed by a firm and manly resistance, or we shall not only hazard the subjugation of our government, but the independence of our nation also: both being evidently struck at by a lawless, domineering power, who respects no rights, and is restrained by no treaties when it is found inconvenient to observe them.

* * * * *

“ When every thing sacred and dear to freemen is threatened, I could not, consistent with the principles which have actuated me through life, remain an idle spectator, and refuse to obey the call of my country, to head its armies for defence; and, therefore, have pledged myself to come forward whenever the exigency shall require it.

“ With what sensations, at my time of life, (now turned of sixty-six,) without ambition or interest to stimulate me thereto, I shall relinquish the peaceful walks to which I had retired, and in the shades of which I had fondly hoped to have spent the remnant of a life worn down with cares in contemplation on the past, and in (the enjoyment of) scenes present and to come, of rural growth, let others, and especially those who are best acquainted with my ways of thinking, decide; while I, believing that man was not designed by Providence to live for himself alone, shall prepare for the worst that can happen.”

General Washington lived but a very short period after his last retirement, at the conclusion of the short war with France. He died at

Mount Vernon, after a short illness, brought on by a cold, on the 14th of December, 1799, aged sixty-eight. His corpse lay in state in the portico of Mount Vernon. On the ornament at the head of the coffin was inscribed, *SURGE AD JUDICIUM*; about the middle of it, *GLORIA DEO*; and, on the silver plate, "GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON, DEPARTED THIS LIFE ON THE 14TH DECEMBER, 1799, ÆT. 68. The mortal remains of the Patriot were interred in a plain subterraneous vault, near the Potomac River, and in the front of the mansion of Mount Vernon, on the 18th of December.

In the General's Will, which is in his own writing, he desires that his debts, though few, should be all paid. And next requires, with particular earnestness that, at the death of his wife, all the slaves over which he had a right should be emancipated; and provided for the aged and the infants among them by requiring, that all who came under the heads of infirmity and infancy should be clothed and fed by his heirs, until the latter class acquired the age of manhood; and forbade the sale or the transportation of any such beyond the limits of the commonwealth.

The sum of four thousand dollars was assigned to the Academy in Alexandria, for the support of a free school annexed to it, for educating orphan and poor children. The shares that the General held in the Potomac River Company, he left to found a University in which to educate youth in polite literature.

To the Earl of Buchan he re-committed the box made out of the oak that sheltered the great Sir William Wallace after the battle of Falkirk; and left Dr. Franklin's gold-headed cane to his brother, Charles Washington. After bequeathing several swords to individuals, he says, "These are accompanied with an injunction not to unsheathe them for the purpose of shedding blood, except it be for self-defence, or in defence of their country and its rights; and, in the latter case, to keep them unsheathed, and prefer falling with them in their hands to the relinquishment thereof."

He lastly desired to be interred privately, without parade or funeral oration.

Wild, in his "Travels in America," states that he saw this great man when in his sixty-fourth year, and that when not made the best of by exterior pains, he appeared older. His stature was about five feet eleven inches; his limbs well shaped and muscular. The same writer observes, that his mind was not disposed to form intimacies, and that his conversation was more free and unreserved at a levee, than at a private interview.

Chateaubriand, who saw General Washington in the year 1791, has this notice of him: "He was a man of tall stature, with a calm and cold, rather than noble air. I passed before him as the most unknown of beings. He was in all his glory; I in the depth of my obscurity; happy, however, that his looks were cast upon me! I have felt myself warmed for it all the rest of my life."

Mr. Stewart, the artist, remarked, when taking the General's portrait, that the sockets of the eyes were larger, and the upper part of the nose broader, than he had met with in any other countenance; and gave it as his opinion, that if the hero had been born in the forests, he would have been the fiercest man among the human race. They who knew Washington best, said that he was of a fierce and irritable disposition, but that his excellent judgment, and the self-command which he constantly exercised, reformed him into a moderator. Virtue rendered him patient, discerning, and considerate; and all his actions were regulated by the principle of justice, so that even the softening influences of philanthropy never prevailed over the rectitude of his mind. To this pre-eminence of character may be added a trait of disinterestedness that may appear surprising to statesmen in the nineteenth century—that, during the period that General Washington filled the office of President of the United States of America, *he did not appoint one of his relatives to any post of trust and emolument.*

of which to the board, I shall rely more on your goodness than on any expression of mine, to render it acceptable." The conclusion of this letter was requested by, and given to a gentleman, who was particularly desirous to have in his possession the signature of the illustrious Washington.*

PHILADELPHIA, 20th February, 1796.

Sir : * * * * "Doubts having arisen, from peculiar calls on the Treasury of this country for money, (occasioned by the expenses of our wars with the Indians—the redemption of our captives at Algiers, obtaining peace with that Regency and Morocco—together with other demands in addition to the ordinary expenditures of government,) that funds with difficulty would be provided to answer them, without imposing additional taxes, a measure wished to be avoided, I was restrained (after consulting one or two influential members of the legislature) from introducing your plan for a contribution ; and, under these circumstances, I avoided communicating the 'Extracts from the Minutes of Proceedings of the Board of Agriculture.' I wish my own engagements would allow me time to attend more than I do to these useful and agreeable pursuits; but having been absent from what I consider my proper home, (except on short occasional visits,) for more than seven years; and having entered into my 65th year, a period which requires tranquillity and ease, I have come to the determination to lease the farms of my Mount Vernon estate, except the mansion house farm, and a grazing one three miles off, which I shall retain in my own occupation, for amusement, whilst life and health is dispensed to me." This letter concludes thus: "I feel ashamed at having employed so much time in matters interesting to myself only. * * * &c. &c.

Your most obedient and obliged servant,

G. WASHINGTON.

PHILADELPHIA, 12th June, 1796.

A letter bearing this date, addressed to Sir J. Sinclair, begins thus:—

"*Sir*,—A long and interesting session of Congress, which did not close until the first day of this month, and the laws which required to be carried into execution promptly, will, I am persuaded, be admitted as a reasonable excuse for my not writing to you since the 20th of February." The remainder of the letter contains copious remarks regarding agriculture, and ends with his usual signature,

G. WASHINGTON.

* Note in the British Museum, dated London, 10th February, 1800.

PHILADELPHIA, 6th March, 1797.

Sir,—On the 11th of December, I wrote you a long letter, and intended, before the close of the last session of Congress, to have addressed you again; but oppressed as I was with the various occurrences incident thereto, especially in the latter part of it, it has not been in my power to do so during its continuance; and now, the arrangements necessary to my departure from this city for a more tranquil theatre, and for the indulgence of rural pursuits, will oblige me to suspend my purpose until I am fixed at Mount Vernon, where I expect soon to be; having resigned the chair of government to Mr. John Adams, on Friday last, the day on which I completed my second four years' administration.

I am sorry to add, that nothing *final* in Congress has been decided respecting the institution of a national board of agriculture. * * * I think it highly probable that next session will bring this matter to maturity.

With the highest esteem and respect,

I have the honor, &c. &c.

G. WASHINGTON.

MOUNT VERNON, 15th July, 1797.

In this letter to Sir John Sinclair, General Washington acknowledges the receipt of letters from him and Lord Hawke—the latter introductory to the visit of Dr. Scandella, whom he pronounces to be a sensible and well-informed man. The remaining part treats only on agriculture, and which he ends, as usual,

To Sir John Sinclair.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

MOUNT VERNON, 6th Nov. 1797.

Acknowledges a letter by the hand of Thomas Macdonald, Esq. and a note by General Kosciusko. In this it is stated that the price of land in America had fallen on two accounts—the depredations committed by the French, and reduction in the price of their home produce. These together, render cash a scarce article: This letter concludes as follows: With great respect, and the highest esteem and regard, I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and obliged,

Humble Servant,

To Sir John Sinclair.

G. WASHINGTON."

Correspondence between General Washington and Sir John Sinclair.

The following letters, part of a correspondence carried on between General Washington and Sir John Sinclair, are copied from the original letters, in the handwriting of General Washington, and which are preserved with the greatest care in the Royal British Museum.

Sir:

PHILADELPHIA, October 20, 1792.

I have received your letter of the 18th of May, enclosing the pamphlet and papers, which you had the goodness to send me.

While I beg your acceptance of my acknowledgments for the polite mark of attention in transmitting these things to me, I flatter myself you will be assured that I consider the subject therein recommended as highly important to society, whose best interests I hope will be promoted by a proper investigation of them, and the happiness of mankind advanced thereby.

I have to regret that the duties of my public station do not allow me to pay that attention to agriculture and the objects attached to it, (which have ever been my favorite pursuit,) that I could wish; but I will put your queries respecting sheep into the hands of such gentlemen as I think most likely to attend to them, and answer them satisfactorily. I must, however, observe, that no important information on the subject can be expected from this country, where we have been so little in the habit of attending either to the breed or improvement of our stock.

With great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Sir John Sinclair.

G. WASHINGTON.

In a letter to Sir John Sinclair, dated 20th July, 1794, are the following passages:—

"I have read, with peculiar pleasure and approbation, the work you patronise. * * * Such a general view of the agriculture in the several counties of Great Britain, is extremely interesting, and cannot fail of being very beneficial to the agricultural concerns of your country, and to those of every other wherein they are read, and must entitle you to their warmest thanks for having set such a plan on foot.

I am so much pleased with the plan and execution myself, as to pray you to have the goodness to direct your bookseller to continue to send them to me. * * * * When the whole are received, I will promote, as far as in me lays, the reprinting of them here. I know of no pursuit in which more real and important service can be rendered to any country, than by improving its agriculture, its breed of useful animals, and other branches of a husbandman's cares. Commons, Tithes, Tenantry, (of which we feel nothing in this country,) are in the list of impediments, I perceive, to perfection in English farming ;—and taxes are heavy deductions from the profit thereof. Of these we have none, or so light, as hardly to be felt. Your system of agriculture, it must be confessed, is in a still superior, and of course much more expensive state, than ours ; but when the balance at the end of the year is struck, by deducting the taxes, poor-rates, and incidental charges of every kind, from the produce of the land in the two countries, no doubt can remain in which scale it is to be found.

It will be some time, I fear, before an Agricultural Society, with congressional aids, will be established here; we must walk, as other countries have done, before we can run : smaller societies must prepare the way for greater ; but with the light before us, I hope we shall not be so slow in maturation as older nations have been. After the peace of Paris, in 1783, and my return to the occupations of a farmer, I paid particular attention to my breed of sheep ;—at the shearing of 1789, the fleeces yielded me the average quantity of $5\frac{1}{2}$ lbs; when called again from my home, my fleeces yielded me not more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.

The sample you were so obliging as to put into the hands of Mr. Lear, for me, of a Scotch fabric, is extremely elegant, and I pray you to accept my thanks for it. * * * * Both Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson had the perusal of the papers which accompanied your note of the 11th of September.

With great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

To Sir John Sinclair.

G. WASHINGTON.

PHILADELPHIA, 10th July, 1795.

In this letter, General Washington thanks Sir John Sinclair, to use his own words : "for the diploma, (received by the hands of Mr. Jay,) admitting me a foreign honorary member of the board of agriculture." He continues : "for this testimony of the attention of that body, and for the honor it has conferred on me, I have a high sense; in communication



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